

Copyright
by
Ana J. Pozzi-Harris
2007

**The Dissertation Committee for Ana Jorgelina Pozzi-Harris Certifies that this is the
approved version of the following dissertation:**

**MARGINAL DISRUPTIONS:
CONCRETE AND MADÍ ART IN ARGENTINA, 1940-1955**

Committee:

Jacqueline Barnitz, Supervisor

Linda D. Henderson

Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro

Ann Reynolds

Richard Shiff

Nicolas Shumway

**MARGINAL DISRUPTIONS:
CONCRETE AND MADÍ ART IN ARGENTINA, 1940-1955**

by

Ana Jorgelina Pozzi-Harris; B.A., M.A.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

December 2007

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many wonderful people who have helped me bring this dissertation to its completion. First and foremost I would like to thank my dissertation advisor, Jacqueline Barnitz, who encouraged me to persist with a difficult but rewarding topic and guided me through the most difficult aspects of the writing and research. Her wide-range knowledge and intelligent views on Latin American art and its history were the key to put in perspective the very specific questions I discuss in this study. Furthermore, her regular email correspondence with me over the years, and her good humor about the pitfalls of the process, encouraged me to keep working on the dissertation regularly, in the midst of my many other personal and work-related commitments. I am also very grateful for the continual support of Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, Curator of the Latin American Art at the Blanton Museum of Art. His in-depth knowledge of the topic, his generosity with research materials from his personal archive, and his accurate criticisms benefitted this dissertation enormously. I also thank the other members of my committee, Ann Reynolds, Linda Henderson, Nicolas Shumway, and Richard Shiff, who carefully read the manuscript and provided helpful suggestions to further refine this study. Throughout the years, the seminars and independent studies I

took with each of them, and with Penelope Davies, were wonderful opportunities to develop many of the ideas which eventually surfaced in this study.

The generous participation of several artists and scholars had a very positive impact in my work. I am grateful to the artists Gyula Kosice and Raúl Lozza, and to the architect Carlos Méndes Mosquera for sharing with me their memories of the 1940s and 50s. I thank Andrea Giunta, Professor of the University of Buenos Aires, and Florencia Bazzano-Nelson, Professor of Art History at Tulane University, for their time in conversation and email and their useful comments. I also discussed various aspects of my dissertation with María Amalia García and Cristina Rossi, both doctoral students at the University of Buenos Aires and superb scholars, who provided insights and guided me through institutions and archives in Buenos Aires. The dissertation took firmer shape after my exchange with many students and scholars in the course of the Cisneros Reading Seminar in Modern and Contemporary Art, directed by Dr. Pérez-Barreiro. In this setting, my discussions with Ariel Jimenez, Curator of the Cisneros Collection, were also source of various ideas, as were my conversations with Courtney Gilbert, Gina Tarver, Erin Aldana, Alberto McKelligan, Cecilia Brunson, and Adele Nelson. At North Georgia College and State University, where I currently work as Adjunct Faculty, I am indebted to Pamela Sachant, Assistant Professor of Art History and Gallery Director, for her suggestions about how to effectively integrate my research into classroom teaching, and to Lee Barrow, Professor of Music and Fine Arts Department Head, for answering my questions about the history of music and translating technical terms.

This project would not have been possible without the very generous financial support of the Department of Art and Art History at The University of Texas at Austin. Preliminary dissertation research was supported by various endowed scholarships from the College of Fine Arts, which enabled summer research time at the Benson Latin American Collection, visits to New York Public Library and to the Library of Congress, and short trips to Buenos Aires. A longer stay in Buenos Aires in 2004 was funded with the Ralph Nelson Fellowship from UT's Office of The President, which allowed me to interview artists and scholars and to get immersed in the documents I found at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (MNBA), Museo Eduardo Sívori, Fundación Espigas, Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Cultura de Izquierdas en la Argentina (CeDInCI), the Instituto Nacional Juan Domingo Perón (INJDP), the library of the Facultad de Humanidades at the University of Buenos Aires, and the Departamento de Materiales Especiales y Reservados de la Biblioteca Nacional de la República Argentina. I am also very grateful to librarians and staff in various institutions. In Austin, I thank library assistant Jorge Salinas, at the Benson Latin American Collection, who arranged for me to have a special spot at the library where I could spend many hours comfortably reading large-size bound periodicals of the early 1940s. At the library of MNBA, I was specially aided by Alejandra Grinberg at the MNBA, Antonia Munno at Museo Eduardo Sívori, Analía Trouvé at Fundación Espigas, and Roberto Pittaluga at CeDInCI. During the last stages of dissertation research and writing, I was aided by library assistant Wendy Nesmith, at Interlibrary Services, UT Austin, who helped me obtain often hard-to-find primary and secondary materials. In this respect, I am also very grateful to Cecilia de

Torre, María Amalia García, Cristina Rossi, and Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, who often mailed me important documents and kept me up-to-date with their own writings. Many thanks are also due to Maureen Howell, Graduate Coordinator for Art History, who dealt with the logistics of completing paperwork and meeting deadlines, and to Robert Penman, at UT's Information Technology Services, who helped me with the dissertation format.

On a personal level, I thank my friends Marguerite Mayhall, Gillian Elliott, Erin Aldana, Alejandra Bisellach, Gina Tarver, Lisa Kirch, María Malagón, and Michaeline May, for sharing their insights about how to balance research and writing with a family and a job. They are true and wonderful friends. And of course, I could not begin to thank enough my family, who supported me mentally and often financially throughout this process. I thank my parents, Jorge Antonio Pozzi and María Haydée Castellaro for never losing faith that I could actually finish the doctorate in spite of all. My father's own enthusiasm about his own ambitious research projects have been a great driving force for my own work over the years. I thank my mother for being constantly interested in my progress, and for accompanying me through visits around Buenos Aires and even xeroxing materials and mailing them to me after I had returned to the U.S. I thank my sisters, Nélica Pozzi and Marcela Pozzi for their continual emotional support, especially in the months after the dissertation defense. I thank my mother and father-in-law, Matilde Cañete and Ariel Harris, for spending time with our two children during our last visit to Argentina so that I could spend time writing. I thank my aunt Norma Castellaro for helping me obtain information in Paris and for helping with French translations.

My greatest debt of gratitude is to my husband, Cristian Alejandro Harris and to our kids, Nicolas and Karen. Over the years, Cristian has accompanied me as a spouse, as a scholar, and as a loving companion. His commitment to this project ranged from discussing the history of Peronism over breakfast, to patiently annotating citation information in documents in Buenos Aires when I was running out of research days, to giving the kids their baths and doing the dishes every night. He has gone with me through the best and the worst of it all. To him, and to Nicolas and Karen, I dedicate this work.

Marginal Disruptions:
Concrete and Madí art in Argentina, 1940-1955

Publication No. _____

Ana Jorgelina Pozzi-Harris, Ph.D.
The University of Texas at Austin, 2007

Supervisor: Jacqueline Barniz

This dissertation analyzes the production of the Concrete and Madí artists, who were active in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s. Concrete and Madí artists proposed, for the first time in this country, the need for an art that was completely different from representational and expressionist art, and they believed that their “inventions,” both visual and linguistic, could foster social change. Many aspects of the journal *Arturo*, published in 1944, and of Concrete and Madí art continue to be a puzzle, such as their relation with past and contemporary artistic and intellectual productions, their relation with the volatile Argentine political climate of the 1940s and 50s, and their ultimate artistic significance. This study interprets the propositions of these artists as responsive to phenomena they experienced in an immediate manner in the time and place in which they lived. The dissertation thus contextualizes Concrete and Madí art in five scenarios: publications by Spanish emigres and Argentine writers which explored the concepts of

“automatism” and “invention;” discourses about “Nazism” and “democracy,” and about “civilization” and “barbarism” that emerged through literary periodicals of the mid-1940s; political propaganda displayed under the rule of Juan Domingo Perón (1946-1955); the development of modern-looking and functional architecture fostered by Peronist architectural policies; and the artists’ dialogues with the ideas of musicians then living in Argentina and Brazil. Ultimately, the dissertation constructs dialogues between specific instances of Argentine cultural and political history of the 1940s and 50s, and a selection of Concrete and Madí works and writings.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
 PART I: <i>Arturo</i>	47
Chapter 1: Some Problems with <i>Arturo</i> : Review and Reassessment	48
Chapter 2: Books as Sources: <i>Arturo</i> and the Argentine Editorial Boom of the Early 1940s	68
Chapter 3: <i>Arturo</i> against Fascism and Barbarism	95
 PART II: Concrete and Madí art.....	128
Chapter 4: Concrete and Madí art: Signifying Dissidence during the First Peronist Government.....	129
Chapter 5: Changing Paths: Concrete and Madí Art and the Experience of Peronism in the 1950s	167
Chapter 6: Productive Dialogues: Concrete and Madí art, and Musical Ideas in Buenos Aires in the 1940s and 50s	192
Some Conclusions.....	219
Endnotes.....	227
Figures.....	272
Bibliography	391
Vita	413

INTRODUCTION

Concrete and Madí art were two aesthetic manifestations that developed in Argentina in the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s. They constituted a groundbreaking episode in the history of Argentine art. Concrete and Madí artists presented themselves as lucid and rational, and they were against expressionism, pictorial illusionism and representation. They first displayed this attitude with the “cut-out frame,” i.e., a pictorial surface of irregular shape that constitutes, as opposed to containing, the design of the work (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). The artists also regarded their geometric works as carriers of social change, and their political ideas ranged from hard-core Communism to a moderate form of Socialism.

Many scholars view the development of Concrete and Madí art in Argentina as a consequence of the artists’ contacts with the Uruguayan artist Joaquín Torres-García, founder of Constructive Universalism; the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro, who developed *Creacionismo*; the Bauhaus-trained photographer Grete Stern; and the Argentine-born sculptor Lucio Fontana, who had been a member of *Arte Concreta* in Milan in the 1930s. These four artists, who had been involved with the European avant-garde in the 1920s and the 1930s, were living in South America in the early 1940s, and there is evidence that they interacted with the Argentine artists in different ways. Without dismissing this interpretation, I propose that Concrete and Madí production was also a response to various other stimuli to which the artists were experiencing. These stimuli were: writings by Spanish emigres published in Argentina, literary texts by writers

associated with the journal *Sur*; the debates around the reception of the defeat and support of Nazism; the revival of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's ideas towards the end of World War II; and the pervading political propaganda and policies of Juan Domingo Perón's rule between 1945 and 1955. Most of these stimuli have been discussed before in articles and exhibition catalogs, either as a broadly-alluded backstage to the artists or the works, or as contexts of reception for them, but my objective is to construct a closer connection between these situations and the artists' production. I argue that the above-mentioned stimuli were social experiences lived, both closely and intensely, by large groups of people living in Argentina during the 1940s and 50s, and that the Concrete and the Madí artists were part of these groups. In this analysis, the artists emerge as fully receptive to these 'immediate experiences', as I call them. This enables me to interpret a selection of Concrete and Madí texts and objects as dialoguing with other specific texts and objects—for example, a novel by Adolfo Bioy Casares, or pieces of Peronist propaganda—which were available to the artists as part of these experiences. These 'dialogues', in fact, are analyses which I develop in order to fully integrate the marginal Concrete and Madí texts and objects to important events and debates occurring in the time and place of their creation. This kind of analysis of Concrete and Madí art has not been attempted before, and it is valuable because it makes Concrete and Madí works and writings meaningful to us—the audiences who look at them and read about them—by integrating them to the history in which they existed.

A second objective of this dissertation is to contribute to dispel the notion that Concrete and Madí art are simply epigones of European art. Of course, the claim that

Concrete and Madí art do not simply imitate European art is not new. Quoting Néstor García Canclini, scholars Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo state that “in Latin American societies, modernism is not the result of a mimetic adoption of imported models.”¹ Meanwhile, Marcelo Pacheco, curator of the 2002 exhibition *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, adopts the term “ex/centric avant-garde” (first used by curator Mari Carmen Ramírez) to categorize Concrete and Madí art, and claims that:

[the term] ex/centric avant-garde is applicable to the autonomy of those artistic and social movements which, emerging outside of the dominant axis of the central countries, were capable of assimilating, with independence and creativity, the utopian impulse that had generated those movements [the movements which had emerged in the central countries].²

Pacheco centers the argument on the positive connotations of the concept of appropriation, meaning that the artists took something from “the central countries” and creatively adapted it to their own needs, be they personal or cultural. The problem with both of these statements, however, is that these scholars are simply making the claim that Concrete and Madí art are different from European art, without actually specifying how the art in question is context-specific: how it finds a niche in the debates of the place where it was created. Because my interpretation of Concrete and Madí art will closely attach this production to singular, context-specific experiences that the artists lived in this particular place (Buenos Aires in the 1940s and 50s), it will ultimately contribute to differentiating them from other artistic forms created in other places.

This does not mean, of course, that I am seeking a Latin American or Argentine ‘essence’ in Concrete and Madí art, or even that all of the debates and events which I describe occurred exclusively in Argentina. Argentina is a country known for its

persistent attachment to European culture, and thus, it should not be surprising that many of the events and debates I address, such as the opposition to Nazism, the boom of functional architecture, or twelve-tone music originated in Europe. These European events and debates affected many countries, and thus, they became “international.” Yet as I will show, for the Argentines, these international debates were reinforced and became far more tangible as they mingled with other events and debates which were specific to their country, such as the rise of Peronism, Peronist propaganda, the revival of Sarmiento, and *Sur*’s publications. In this mingling of events and debates, then, some aspects of “international” culture became particular to the place and time in which Concrete and Madí artists lived and worked. This analysis, then, is completely different from saying that the Concrete and Madí artists took something from “the central countries” and “assimilat[ed] it with independence and creativity.” Whatever the artists took from other countries was already in their country, mingling with and reinforcing local events. As I see it, then, Concrete and Madí production was a singular response for a particular place and time—a place and a time in which international concerns became part and parcel of local concerns.

Because in this study I argue that Concrete and Madí production responded to context-specific experiences, I believe that it is necessary to use a context-specific system of ideas to analyze the art. In view of this, the last chapter in this study incorporates to the analysis of Concrete and Madí art a system of ideas which the artists were discussing around the same time when they created a few specific works. These ideas were the formal characteristics of the music of Arnold Schönberg and Alois Haba, and various

other forms of 20th-century electronic and experimental music. Interpretations which integrate examples of Concrete and Madí production with musical ideas have not been attempted before, and they are useful because they widen our understanding of the works themselves.

Accounts of Concrete and Madí art

The first sign of activity of the Concrete and Madí artists was the journal *Arturo*, published in Buenos Aires in 1944. The journal was striking in that it forcefully declared the need for an art and a poetry that was completely different from nature—or, as the editors called it, a new invention. The journal's main contributors—Carmelo Arden Quin, Gyula Kosice, Edgar Bailey, Rhod Rothfuss, Tomás Maldonado, and Lidi Prati—did not constitute an organized group, but they shared enough of the same interests to put together a collective publication. Central essays by Arden Quin, Bailey, and Kosice insisted that new inventions needed to avoid irrationality, onirism, and Surrealist automatism, while Rothfuss's essay spoke of the need to avoid pictorial illusionism by replacing the traditional rectangular frame with a cut-out frame. Prati contributed playfully drawn vignettes, and Maldonado submitted three drawings and the journal cover—a contribution which seemingly parted with the emphasis on control and reason called forth in the essays. The journal, in turn, included contributions by the Uruguyan painters Joaquín Torres-García and Augusto Torres, the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro, the Brazilian poet Murilo Mendes, and the Portuguese painter María Helena Vieira da Silva (who lived in Brazil).

In the Argentina of the early 1940s, no artist or movement held truly comparable ideas to those exposed in *Arturo* or in the early exhibitions of the Concrete and Madí artists. Exhibition reviews show that the most successful Argentine artists from this period worked in styles which may be categorized as classical and academic; picturesque and romantic; and expressionist. Representing the first trend in the early 1940s were artists like Troiano Troiani, Alfredo Sturla, and Raúl Mazza, whose works—winners of the highest prizes in the 1942 national salon but totally forgotten today—represented respectively an ancient goddess (Fig. 3), a female nude (Fig. 4), and an academic interior (Fig. 5). Other popular and well known artists were Rodrigo Bonome, Rodolfo Castagna, and Augusto Marteau, who concentrated on picturesque representations of urban and rural Argentine scenes (Fig. 6, Fig. 7, and Fig. 8). Among well reputed artists who worked along an expressionist line were Pompeyo Audivert, Ramón Gómez Cornet, and Raquel Forner, all of whom represented human suffering and social crisis by using expressive distortions and allegories (Fig. 9, Fig. 10, and Fig. 11). Among the less traditional artists were Emilio Pettoruti, Norah Borges, Juan Battle Planas, and Juan del Prete (Fig. 12, Fig. 13, Fig. 14, and Fig. 15). Another important artist was Antonio Berni, who in 1943 earned the Grand Prize of the National Salon for his painting *Lily* (Fig. 16). In 1944, he founded the Taller de Arte Mural [Mural Art Workshop] together with Lino Enea Spilimbergo, Demetrio Urruchua, Juan Carlos Castagnino, and Manuel Colmeiro. The artists painted the ceiling of the Galerías Pacífico in Buenos Aires (Fig. 17). A few years earlier, in 1941, the painter Miguel Carlos Victorica, member of the Grupo Impulso [Impulso Group], from the working class neighborhood of La Boca, had earned the first

prize at the National Salon for his work *Cocina Bohemia* [Bohemian Kitchen] (Fig. 18).³ In view of the artistic spectrum of the early 1940s, then, it is evident that *Arturo*'s ideas presented a sharp contrast to the aesthetic values of that epoch.

From the animators of *Arturo*, two artists' groups formed in 1946. One was the Madí group, which Kosice led since 1947. Other Madí artists I discuss in this study were Rothfuss, Diyi Laañ, Esteban Eitler, and Raimundo Rasas Pét, which was probably a pseudonym used by Kosice. Arden Quin was also involved with the Madí group until 1947, when he moved to Paris. There he founded another Madí group with the Uruguayan poet Volf Roitman in 1951. In Buenos Aires, Madí sought to simultaneously transform various artistic media—painting, sculpture, poetry, dance, music, drama, and architecture—with a fundamental principle of “invention” as anti-representation. Madí events were soirees in which musicians, artists, poets, and dancers performed and read manifestos surrounded by Madí paintings and sculptures. The works were arranged in playful clusters that hung from the walls and the ceilings (Fig. 19). Adding to the cut-out frame, Madí artists developed the notions of “articulated sculpture” and “articulated painting,” i.e., artistic objects in which various attached parts could potentially be manipulated by the viewer (Fig. 20 and Fig. 21).

In spite of the fact that scholars have attempted to find a meaning for the name “Madí,” it is likely that this was a made-up word without any meaning. This attitude on the part of the artists embodied the precept that all Madí “inventions,” including the group's name, were absolutely unprecedented and completely non-referential. Between

1947 and 1954, the group published a magazine named *Arte Madí* in its first three issues and *Arte Madí Universal* in the remaining ones.⁴

The second group springing from *Arturo* was the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención [Concrete-Invention Art Association], which was led by Maldonado. Other members I address were Prati, Alfredo Hlito, Alberto Molenberg, Edgar Bailey, Manuel Espinosa, Raúl Lozza, and Matilde Werbin. Like the Madí group, the Asociación included painters (Maldonado, Molenberg, Espinosa, Lozza, Prati), sculptors (Enio Iommi), a musician (Werbin), and poets (e.g., Bailey) but from the beginning, its focus was on the search for a “Concrete” painting. Concrete paintings aimed at avoiding pictorial illusionism and called attention to the materiality of the works, i.e., their ‘concreteness.’ The artists perceived “the concrete” to be the opposite of “the ideal”—which they associated with illusionism—and they perceived “the ideal” as something supported by bourgeois art and society. A belief in Marxism and in dialectic materialism was central to the ideas and pursuits of the artists of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención. For a few months in 1946, the Concrete artists linked “the concrete” with the above-mentioned “cut-out frame” (for example, Fig. 22), arguing that their use of an irregular frame disrupted the illusionism provoked by the traditional rectangular frame. At some point during that year, however, they came to regard this format as inadequate for their purposes, and they went on to develop the “coplanal,” i.e., a work of art in which various parts are attached with rods and placed against the wall (for example, Fig. 23). The artists explained their positions in a few short-lived publications, among them, the single issue of *Revista de Arte Concreto*, published in August 1946.

The Asociación stopped working as a close-knit unit around 1947, but some of its former members continued to create and exhibit “Concrete art” for another decade. Around 1948, their hard-core Marxist beliefs and Communist affiliations began to wane, and the Concrete artists became concerned with creating works of art that could serve as instruments to transform society in practical ways. Starting around 1948, some of them began to show interest in modern architecture, typography, and industrial design, since they perceived that architectural and industrial products could prompt the social change they desired. In their paintings of this later period (for example, Fig. 24), they tended to abandon their earlier focus on planarity and materiality and turned towards suggesting, with a geometrical language, the discoveries of the experimental physics of their time. In 1951, Maldonado founded the journal *Nueva Visión*, whose pages characterized the group’s attitudes during the early 1950s. He was the director of the journal until 1955.

One Concrete artist, the painter Raúl Lozza, did not accept the changed path of the Concrete artists. In 1947, he split from the Asociación and went on to create his own group, entitled Perceptismo. Perceptismo grew out of Lozza’s complaint that the Concrete coplanal did not effectively prevent illusionism. He argued that the coplanal needed to take into account the color of the wall on which the work was hung. He went on to develop other ideas, such as that of “open structure” and “*cualimetría de la forma plana*” [metric quality of the flat shape]—a mathematically calculated series of relationships between the angles of the geometric figure and the saturation of the colors used. In 1949, Lozza began publishing the journal *Perceptismo: Teórico y Polémico*,

which included his writings and reproductions of his works. Since my study focuses on Concrete and Madí art, Perceptismo is beyond its scope.

It is difficult to pinpoint a date for the demise of the Concrete and Madí groups, but a few facts suggest that by the mid-1950s the artists were taking other routes. In 1954, Maldonado accepted a teaching position at the Hochschule für Gestaltung [School of Design] in Ulm, West Germany, directed by the Swiss Concrete artist Max Bill and gave up painting shortly afterwards. Other Concrete artists soon took up other interests as well. In 1957, Hlito changed the direction of his painting, focusing on color rather than line and geometric figures (for example, Fig. 25). Meanwhile, the last issue of *Arte Madí Universal* appeared in June 1954, and in 1957, Kosice left for Paris, initially to promote Madí art in the French capital, and later to explore his own personal brand of Kinetic art (for example, Fig. 26). In the 1960s, a few important exhibitions in Buenos Aires included examples of Concrete and/or Madí art, but the curators regarded them retrospectively, as trends that had given way to other new endeavors. These shows included *15 años de arte Madí* [Fifteen years of Madí art], held at the Museo de Arte Moderno in 1961, and *Del arte concreto a la nueva tendencia* [From Concrete art to the new trend], also at the Museo de Arte Moderno in 1963. In 1976, a small show held at Galería Arte Nuevo and entitled *Homenaje a la vanguardia argentina de la década del cuarenta* [Homage to the Argentine avant-garde of the 1940s], revived art historical interest in Concrete and Madí art.

The first systematic study of Concrete and Madí art appeared in 1980, on the occasion of the exhibition *Vanguardias de la Década del 40: Arte Concreto-Invencción*,

Arte Madí, Perceptismo [Avant-gardes of the 1940s: Concrete-Invention art, Madí art, Perceptism], held at the Museo Sívori in Buenos Aires and curated by Nelly Perazzo. The show was organized as part of a research seminar in which Perazzo and a team of students concentrated their efforts on locating works, collecting documents, and interviewing the artists—none of which had been done before in a systematic manner. Perazzo's intention to return to the sources responded to the less rigorous forms of art history and criticism that prevailed in Argentine art history up to the 1980s.⁵ The exhibition catalog presented a sharp contrast to two earlier books on Madí art published outside of academic circles, such as Jorge Rivera's *Madí y la Vanguardia Argentina* [Madí and the Argentine avant-garde] (1976) and Osiris Chierico's *Reportaje a una anticipación* [Interview to an anticipation] (1979).⁶ Both texts were based on Kosice's retrospective reports, and their writing style was narrative and uncritical. In contrast, the Sívori exhibition and its catalog raised questions about the chronological accuracy of the sequence of events as described by the artists, and about the nature of the artists' original contribution. Two years later, Kosice published the book *Arte Madí* [Madí art]—a book that, except for its prologue, consisted exclusively of reprints of a selection of primary documents.⁷ By presenting documents and excluding commentary, the artist seemingly sought to demonstrate that the historical evidence he provided was sufficient. The next year (1983), when Perazzo published a more detailed book about the avant-garde of the 1940s, she completely excluded Madí art and its history in order to avoid conflict with the artist.

The exhibition *Vanguardias de la Década del 40* and related publications brought to the fore central methodological problems affecting the study of Concrete and Madí art, and proposed a number of approaches to it. One methodological problem which continues to prevail today concerns the tensions between the accounts of the artists and the historical documents. The artists continue to make statements suggesting their protagonism within the groups, their precedence over other artists, and the originality and legitimacy of their propositions. Their quarrels became even more aggressive after the works of art started to gain international visibility in the late 1980s and their prices began to rise in the early 1990s.⁸ Kosice and Arden Quin, for example, continue to argue about the origin of the word “Madí” and the authorship of the Madí manifesto. Arden Quin claimed that it was an acronym of his name: CarMelo Alves ArDen QuIn, while Gyula Kosice said that it was a distortion of “Madrid,” a name he often heard on the street during the Spanish Civil War. It has also been suggested that the name “Madí” was created by joining the first two syllables of *materialismo dialéctico* [dialectical materialism].⁹ These quarrels are endless, yet the fact remains that no discussion of the name “Madí” ever appeared in the primary sources and that from the foundation of the group, the term had a non-referential function. Regarding the authorship of the manifesto, it is unclear, since the text was published with no author in the no. 0 of *Arte Madí Universal* in 1947, and Kosice claims he wrote it. Arden Quin, however, claims to have authored and to have publicly read a different version of this text at the first Madí exhibition, held on August 3rd, 1946 at the Instituto Francés de Estudios Superiores in Buenos Aires.

The former Concrete artists have been less aggressive towards each other, but their retrospective accounts have also contributed to push forth their importance. As a former Concrete artist, Lozza accuses Maldonado of abandoning the true path of Concrete art to become an imitator of Max Bill.¹⁰ Juan Melé also comments that the importance attributed to Maldonado's 1948 trip to Europe as a turning point in the ideas of the Concrete artists has been overstated, while he resents the fact that his own trip around this time has hardly been discussed.¹¹ Meanwhile, Maldonado himself has made declarations regarding his knowledge of European sources which, unverifiable by documentation, have served to both mythologize and legitimize his modernist pedigree.¹² All of the artists, in turn, have given contradictory accounts about the nature of their relationship with Torres-García.¹³

In the scholarship of the 1970s and early 1980s, the focus was the chronological history of the movements. A few historians privileged the word of the artists over documentary evidence (Rivera, Chierico), and other historians do the opposite (Perazzo). All of these accounts, in any event, center on listing events—group foundations and separations, exhibitions, publications, some documents about the critical reception, and biographical details. These scholars also emphasize the significant differences between Concrete and *Madí* art, focusing on what made these movements distinct from each other, as opposed to what they shared. Accordingly, they usually describe Concrete art as a rational, programmatic, well-organized endeavor in which artists submitted their individual opinions for group consensus. On the other hand, they tend to characterize *Madí* as a more anarchic and playful venture.

These scholars also tend to extensively analyze the texts (manifestos, journal articles, pamphlets, etc), paying far less attention to the works of art. Perazzo, for example, includes lengthy quotations of primary texts followed by very sketchy descriptions of individual works.¹⁴ Rivera and Chierico hardly discuss particular works of art. Close readings of poetry, a central endeavor of both the Concrete and Madí groups, is also largely absent from these studies. Finally, Perazzo inscribes Concrete and Madí art within the history of European and Argentine art history, establishing that the referents for Concrete art were Piet Mondrian, Theo Van Doesburg, and Max Bill, as well as local or regional artists: Joaquín Torres-García, Emilio Pettoruti, Juan del Prete, the early Lucio Fontana, and other figures who had developed modes of Abstract art in South America in the 1920s and 30s.¹⁵ This scholarship, however, does not make significant attempts to connect Concrete and Madí art with extra-artistic circumstances, such as the social and political climate of the period, or with cultural expressions beyond the artistic ones.

With the popularization of “Latin American art” in Europe, the United States, and Latin American countries in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Concrete and Madí art came to be articulated with other debates. In large exhibitions of Latin American art, Concrete and Madí works were shown and analyzed in conjunction with and in contrast to a wide spectrum of works, trends, and movements from the region. In the catalog of an early show, *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era* (1989), Concrete and Madí works are analyzed in a category of their own, with a different essay devoted to Brazilian Neoconcrete art, Optical and Kinetic art from Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina (with

dates ranging from the mid-1950s through the late 1960s), a few spatialist works by Lucio Fontana from the 1950s, and works by the Mexican sculptor Mathias Goeritz. This organization suggests that a set of problems different from those of Concrete and Madí art prevailed in these latter manifestations.¹⁶ Subsequent exhibitions, however, displayed Concrete and Madí art next to or nearby other types of work, thus suggesting various interregional connections, each of which followed a distinct rationale. The curators of *Latin American art of the Twentieth Century*, held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1993, arranged Argentine Concrete and Madí art, Brazilian Concrete and Neoconcrete art, Columbian Constructivism, and Venezuelan Kineticism as a unit based on the fact that the artists involved originated in countries without strong national traditions or Precolumbian roots.¹⁷ In *Art d'Amérique latine* (Centre Pompidou, 1992), the Argentine Concrete and Madí works were displayed in an individual room, even though the catalog presents Uruguayan Constructive art, Argentine Concrete and Madí art, Brazilian Concrete and Neoconcrete art, Venezuelan Optical and Kinetic art, and Argentine Optical and Kinetic art under the same umbrella ("*Du constructivisme au cinétisme*") ["From Constructivism to Kineticism"] on the basis that all the movements interacted with the Parisian art scene in different moments, and were ultimately validated by it.¹⁸ *Inverted Utopias* (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2004), curated by Mari Carmen Ramírez and Héctor Olea, was organized around "constellations" that emerged from the curators' subjective and "direct experience of each artwork and its relationship to other works"—and not from any "outworn framework of art history and the naïve parameters of essentialism."¹⁹ In this arrangement, Concrete and Madí works shared the constellation

“Progression and Rupture” with works by Torres-García, a selection of Brazilian Concrete and Neo-Concrete objects, and works by Lucio Fontana. According to Ramírez, the feature that all of them shared was their comparable status as “vital structures”—“subjective” and “animate” structures—meaning an inversion of the “passive,” “pure and objective” structures that had prevailed in the work of Mondrian, Van Doesburg, Tatlin, and Lissitzky.²⁰ The curators of the Argentine Colección Costantini—now permanently housed at MALBA, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires—arranged the works and movements by decades within the museum space. Thus, works from the 40s and 50s appear in one cluster, while art created in the 20s and art created in 60s and 70s appears in other clusters. The 40s/50s cluster includes Argentine Madí and Concrete art, Brazilian Concrete art, and early examples of Argentine and Venezuelan Kinetic art. This suggests a conceptual separation from the work of Torres-García—often presented as a source for Concrete and Madí art in other shows, but placed with other works of the 1920s and 30s here—and also a conceptual separation from Brazilian Neo-Concrete art and later examples of Argentine Kinetic art—often discussed as manifestations connected with Concrete and Madí art.²¹ The Venezuelan Cisneros collection, on the other hand, has shown Argentine Concrete and Madí art, Brazilian Concrete and Neoconcrete art, and Venezuelan Kinetic art focusing on the shared formal features of these Latin American works—hard lines, bright colors, and, fundamentally, non figurative representation—and categorizing them as “Latin American Geometric Abstraction.”²² In the recent show *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, 2007), however, curator Gabriel Pérez-

Barreiro rationalized the collection on the fact that all the artists involved associated geometric forms with utopian ideas (“geometry” and “hope”).²³

These exhibitions, usually very successful, promoted the art of Latin America—a region broadly defined as all territory south of the U.S.—and contributed to the increase in the public interest in both the art and the region. At the same time, these exhibitions evidenced the many conceptual contradictions and historical discontinuities embedded in a construction such as “Latin American art.” In the twentieth century, the artistic scenes of most Latin American countries were largely disconnected from one another, despite the fact that Latin American artists shared the same language (except in Brazil) and that their countries of origin had shared a colonial experience. Even when artists from Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Chile, Uruguay, and other countries were in contact and were relatively aware of their respective art production, as a whole, their most important cultural references were other European and North American artists and not other Latin American artists. This situation, therefore, continues to call into question whether it is possible to speak of a “Latin American art” and brings up the colonialist connotations implied in the definition of “Latin America.”²⁴ When considering the relationship of Concrete and Madí art to other art created in Latin America, it is not difficult to see that the ideas prevailing in each of the artistic projects named above actually have very little in common with Concrete and Madí art, and that, in many cases, each artist or movement worked with little knowledge of what other Latin American artists were producing.²⁵

Concurrently, other exhibitions showed Concrete and Madí art as part of a narrative of Argentine or “Río de la Plata” art, and thus emphasized the relationship of Concrete and Madí art with artistic manifestations and events taking place within more restricted geographical areas and/or time frames. The shows *Argentina: Arte Concreto-Invención, 1945, Grupo Madí, 1946* (Rachel Adler Gallery, New York, 1990) and *Arte Concreto Invención/Arte Madí* (Galerie Von Bartha, Basel, Switzerland, 1991) displayed about thirty works by Madí and Concrete artists dating from the 1940s.²⁶ The exhibition *Art from Argentina* (Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 1994) included distinctive examples of Argentine art: Xul Solar, Antonio Berni, Marta Minujín, Pablo Suárez, Victor Grippo, Guillermo Kuitca, the artists of Nueva Figuración, the Concrete and Madí artists, and many more. In the catalog, the curators related these works to the original place where they were created and organized them as a narrative occurring in a more or less linear time.²⁷ *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata* (The Americas Society, New York, 2001) traced a regional history in which the Uruguayan circle of Torres-García set the stage for the Argentine movements.²⁸ *Arte Abstracto Argentino* (Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires, 2002) included examples of non-figurative Argentine Abstract art dating from the 1910s and through the 1950s.²⁹ *Arte Madí: L’Art Sudamericain* (Musée de Grenoble, Paris, 2002) included Madí art from Argentina and works by Arden Quin created in Paris in the 1950s.³⁰

The catalog essays that accompanied these exhibitions greatly widened the scope of questions initially opened by Perazzo.³¹ Adding to the connections that she had developed between Concrete and Madí art, and the work of Torres-García, Pettoruti, del

Prete, the early Fontana, Mondrian, Van Doesburg, and the Swiss Concrete artists, the catalogs variously stressed other factors: the impact of the German photographer and former Bauhaus student Grete Stern, who lived in Argentina; the presence in Buenos Aires of Spanish emigres fleeing Francoist Spain; the climate of expectation and excitement lived in Argentina at the end of World War II, and the popularity and rule of Juan Domingo Perón under which the artists lived and worked. Beyond the new information, what is curious about these catalogs is how they presented the relationship between the factors of the historical context, on the one hand, and the artists and their production on the other. The historical events appear as a backdrop to the artists' activities, but the writers make no significant efforts to articulate a relationship between this information and the artists or the art. This is specially true of the show *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, which included three "context and documentation rooms," while its catalog includes an extensive chronology covering a great variety of political, cultural, and artistic events occurring in Argentina and in the world between 1909 and 1955.³² In other words, the narrative in the catalogs includes long lists of names and events which, the reader is led to presume, were factors in the development of Concrete and Madí art, but with no explanation of how these names and events affected the Concrete and Madí artists or their art.

Finally, a few exhibitions have focused on the artistic achievements of the recently founded group Arte Madí Internacional, which is unrelated to the Madí group of Buenos Aires of the 1940s and 50s, and which is beyond the scope of this dissertation. After his break-up with Kosice in 1947, Arden Quin left for Paris where, in 1951, he

founded a Madí group with the Uruguayan poet Volf Roitman. In 1992, Arden Quin created the Asociación Madí Internacional, a group which includes many members from very many countries who adhere to the basic precepts of Arden Quin's version of Madí. This group has launched several recent exhibitions, for example, *Arte Madí Internacional 50 años después* (Centro de Exposiciones y Congresos, Zaragoza, Spain, 1996), *Arte Madí* (Museo Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, 1997), and *Da Madí a Madí* (1946-1999) (Gallararte: Civica Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan, 1999).³³ In 2000, an anthology of this group was published by Editorial Godoy in Spain (*Arte Madí Internacional: Fin del Milenio*), which covered the work of many artists from very many countries—of which Argentina is conspicuously absent.³⁴ In 2003, Volf Roitman launched the Madí Museum in Dallas, Texas, as a permanent place to represent this group.³⁵ Arden Quin himself has had various one-person shows in France and Spain, and his personal history has been the subject of two interesting monographs, both largely based on interviews with the artist.³⁶

These large and well-attended exhibitions of the last two decades have contributed to increasing the visibility of Concrete and Madí art in the international scene and in European and North-American academic circles. Proof of this is the succinct but well-written account on “Concrete-Invention” and “Madí” included in the latest edition of Marilyn Stokstad's widely-used art history survey textbook. This section, entitled “Experiments with form in Buenos Aires,” places Torres-García as “the forerunner of the Latin American experiments,” and explains the visual and conceptual objectives of the Concrete and Madí groups by closely analyzing two illustrated works of the 1940s: a cut-

out frame by Lozza and a sculpture by Kosice.³⁷ The account has been placed between sections on “Abstract Expressionism” and “Post-War Photography”—a factor which encourages cross-cultural comparisons and which is bound to prompt intriguing questions in the classroom setting.

Specialized studies on the subject have multiplied as well. In 1996, Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro completed the only existing dissertation on Concrete and Madí art, entitled “The Argentine avant-garde: 1944-1950.” In this study, he readdresses Perazzo’s intention to render an accurate history of Concrete, Madí, and Perceptivist art based on the close study of primary sources. Unlike Perazzo, however, Pérez-Barreiro explicitly brings to the fore the fact that it is not possible to write such an accurate history, and critically explores the reasons why this is so: many documents and works of art have been lost, destroyed, or tampered with; collectors and artists have redated many works hoping to raise their market price and to have a claim to originality; and the artists continually contradict one another and themselves in retrospective interviews when they provide details about the history of Concrete, Madí, and Perceptivist art.³⁸ Pérez-Barreiro also characterizes the Concrete and Madí artists as an “avant-garde” following the theoretical categories developed by Peter Bürger and Renato Poggioli. This status, he argues, owes to the fact that Concrete, Madí, and Perceptivist artists questioned, for the first time in Argentina, the autonomy of the art object in bourgeois society. Characterizing the artists as proletarian and describing their group activities and publications as agitational, he concludes that they challenged the previous generation of modern artists. For this previous generation, which included artists and writers associated with the Martín Fierro

Group (Pettoruti, Xul Solar, the architect Alberto Prebisch, and Jorge Luis Borges among the writers), practicing modern art had merely signified catching up with European modernism. Pérez-Barreiro suggests that this was because this generation had been in part supported by patrons from the upper class: the journal *Sur* and the Asociación Amigos del Arte. For the Concrete, Madí, and Perceptivist artists, however, practicing modern art implied reflecting (in a Marxist sense) their belief that the world was transitioning into a classless society. According to Pérez-Barreiro, then, the determining factor in the clashing attitudes of these two generations was their divergent—and antagonistic—social class.³⁹ Pérez-Barreiro's dissertation is unique in many ways, and various aspects of it are discussed in subsequent chapters of this study.

In the last decade, a number of researchers associated with the Universidad de Buenos Aires and the Instituto Julio E. Payró have posed questions about the artists' interventions in cultural institutions (through journals, newspapers, museums, galleries, salons, educational institutions, and others) and about the institutions' reception of their activities, ideas, and attitudes. Following the writings of Pierre Bordieu, they focus on analyzing the “*campo artístico*” [artistic field], understood as the “group of institutions, of forms of legitimating, of cultural judgment, and of establishment of values.”⁴⁰ Closely focused on archival research, they seek to account for the diversity of artistic debates carried through a particular period, at a national and international level. In what concerns Concrete and Madí art, Andrea Giunta's groundbreaking *Vanguardia, Internacionalismo y Política: arte argentino en los años sesenta* [Avant-garde, Internationalism, and Politics: Argentine art in the 1960s] questioned the relationship of the government of

Juan Domingo Perón and the various entities that supported “Abstract” or at least “Modern” art in Argentina, i.e., the Concrete, Madí, and Perceptivist artists, and the art critic Jorge Romero Brest. Giunta points out that scholars like Perazzo characterize the relationship between Peronism and Argentine “Abstract” art on the basis of one single piece of information: the 1948 and 1949 speeches in which the Peronist Minister of Education, Dr. Oscar Ivanissevich, had condemned all “isms” of modern art as “morbid.” Giunta, however, brings to the fore the artists’ participation in two Peronist-organized events held in the early 1950s and thus revisits the presumed antagonism between the Concrete and the Madí artists, and Peronist artistic policies.⁴¹ Giunta’s account is also the first to analyze the Concrete, Madí, and Perceptivist groups as a common front, as opposed to all previous and most of the later literature which analyzes the groups as separate entities.

Also closely attentive to the study of archival documentation are the writings of Ana Longoni and Daniela Lucena, María Amalia García, and Cristina Rossi. Longoni and Lucena have studied the interventions of the Concrete artists in the Argentine Communist Party. The question of the Concrete artists’ relation to “Communism” had always been a puzzling one. The 1946 manifesto of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención and other texts from the same period clearly manifested the artists’ support of Marxism, Leninism, and Stalinism, but there remained many doubts about which artists, if any, had been actually affiliated with the Argentine Communist Party, and why or how they had distanced themselves from it around 1948. When asked retrospectively, the artists gave confusing answers. Longoni and Lucena trace the Concrete artists’ contributions to the

journal *Orientación*, one of the organs of the Argentine Communist Party, and thus provide information which helps to answer these important questions. They also explore how Maldonado's ideas responded to larger debates about the political role of art held within the Italian Communist Party.⁴²

María Amalia García investigates the institutional exchanges between Argentina and Brazil as sites of the formation of an interrelated discourse about Abstract art in both countries. She researches the contacts and exchanges between Argentine and Brazilian artists, critics, and other cultural figures, especially those contacts generated by travel and by participation in institutions. García's intention is to avoid using either one of the two frames of reference usually at work when characterizing Concrete art: the individual countries (Argentina or Brazil), and the overarching concept "Latin America."⁴³ In an important article, "La construcción del arte abstracto" ["The construction of abstract art"] (2004), she traces institutional policies of two entities which account for the links between the cultural scenes of Argentina and Brazil: the Instituto de Arte Moderno in Buenos Aires and the São Paulo Biennial.⁴⁴ Another article focuses on the ambulant activities of the critic Jorge Romero Brest in both countries. García's general conclusion in both articles is that these policies, exchanges, and activities contributed to construct a regional discourse about "Abstraction."⁴⁵

Cristina Rossi has published articles focusing on the impact of Torres-García, the debates published in the journal *Ver y Estimar*, the musicians that took part in the Madí and Concrete groups, the interactions between architects, designers, and artists that took place at Krayd Galería de Arte in the late 1940s, and others.⁴⁶ Her articles seek to expand

the individual histories of the Concrete and the Madí groups by viewing them in light of the artistic debates occurring in other “cultural formations” (a category she borrows from Raymond Williams) which were active during the same period. An important study entitled “En el fuego cruzado entre el realismo y la abstracción” [“In the fire crossed between Realism and Abstraction”] looks into various artistic debates: the arguments supporting muralism brought to Argentina by David Alfaro Siqueiros in 1933, the writings about “Nuevo Realismo” by Antonio Berni, the published exchanges about Realism by the writer Héctor J. Agosti and the painter Raúl Lozza, and the poll published in the journal *Contrapunto* (Dec. 1944-Oct. 1945) and entitled “Where is painting going?”, in which many artists of different tendencies participated.⁴⁷ By analyzing these debates, Rossi intends to put in perspective [“matizar”] the radical declarations that Tomás Maldonado made about the need for a Concrete art in 1945 and 1946. Various other articles approach other cultural formations seeking to expand the internal debates of the institutions that supported them. As a whole, the thematic core that emerges from her studies concerns the tensions between “Abstraction” and “Figuration” in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s.

As explained above, the scholars associated with the Instituto Julio E. Payró base their research on archival documentation, and their investigations account for the circulation and reception of artistic production—largely, the textual production. In the long run, the meanings that these scholars attach to artistic production are given by the various constructions which institutions (museums, biennials, journals, collectors, curators) make of the productions. While this approach is owed in part to their theoretical

sources (Bourdieu, Williams), it also responds to other more practical reasons. In the last ten to fifteen years there has been a proliferation in Buenos Aires of privately sponsored centers of archival documentation. A relatively new phenomenon in the country, these centers have begun the systematic collection of magazines, journals, catalogs, and papers of any kind that aid in the reconstruction of the critical debates surrounding the works of art, the artists, and the criticism itself. On the other hand, the personal archives of the Concrete and Madí artists are still not readily available through public institutions, since most of the artists are alive. The combined result of the changed theoretical winds, the increased availability of primary research materials associated with circulation and reception, and the difficulties in accessing the artists' personal papers is that there has been, in the last ten to fifteen years, an almost total move away from questions of artistic intention and, even more so, of investigations that begin with looking at works of art.

Gabriela Siracusano and María Cecilia Tomasini deviate from this approach. In two articles published in the late 1990s, Siracusano very broadly traces several terms that variously appear in the writings of the Concrete artists ("space-time," "mathematical structure," "polidimensional," "relativity," "discontinuity") on the one hand and, on the other, she broadly discusses the scientific ideas that seemingly interested the Concrete artists in the 1950s (non-Euclidean geometry, the fourth dimension, and notions of the space-time continuum).⁴⁸ She also expands the context of the artists' perceptions about the relationship between art and science by bringing up similar ideas held by the critics that supported them: Jorge Romero Brest and Damian Bayón. Siracusano points out that the artists' appropriation of scientific concepts worked on two levels: as a system

equivalent to the problems of painting, and as a working methodology that demanded verification and constant revision. Maria Cecilia Tomasini also discusses the role of scientific ideas in the writings and works that Raúl Lozza created during his Perceptivist period.⁴⁹ Lozza's main pictorial theories—open structure, active color field, metric quality of the flat shape—argues Tomasini, are inspired by the tensions of an electromagnetic field. Like Siracusano, Tomasini argues that Lozza does not illustrate scientific ideas but suggests an equivalent system to them. One highly unusual aspect of Tomasini's working methodology is that she seeks Lozza's approval in order to validate her interpretations.

From a thematic point of view, my study addresses a few previously explored issues, it develops more extensively some that have been barely touched upon, and it explores some new ones. One of the issues which I revisit is the question of the sources for *Arturo*. I review and reassess the interpretative problems posed by the journal, and I discuss the possible impact of Torres-García, Fontana, Huidobro, and Stern on the formation of the ideas that surfaced in it. I expand this range of sources by looking into texts published by Spanish emigres then living in Argentina. Other scholars have only mentioned many names of Spanish emigres who lived in Argentina at this time, without exploring which emigres may actually have been relevant to the development of Concrete and Madí art, or how the artists accessed their ideas. Similarly, the international political climate at the end of the Second World War has been mentioned before as a background for the utopian statements pronounced by the artists in the journal *Arturo*, but the way in which this context actually left traces in the publication has not been previously

discussed. The context of Peronism has been discussed several times in relation to Concrete and Madí art in the last decade, but the discussion has been limited to either the reception of the artists by the regime, or to the regime's artistic policies and, more specifically to its changing attitudes towards "Abstraction." In this study, however, I contrast the artists' attitudes towards "representation" with Perón's attitude towards the functions of political propaganda, since centering the discussion on political propaganda more accurately renders the artists' perception that their art had a political mission. I also address the artists' participation in a few institutions which opposed the Peronist government, and I interpret a number of particular Concrete and Madí writings and works of art as specific responses to the context of Peronism. While the contributions by musicians to Concrete and Madí magazines has been surveyed before, I discuss the notion that musical ideas can be used as a context-specific theoretical framework to analyze Concrete and Madí works. Among the issues which have not been studied before, I explore the possibility that the editors of *Arturo* may have found relevant ideas for their notion of "invention" in fictional writings by Argentine writers. I also explore the possibility that the revival of the dichotomy "civilization" and "barbarism" in the 1940s—a dichotomy first articulated by the Argentine statesman Domingo Faustino Sarmiento in the 19th century—may have been at play in *Arturo*'s statements.

Immediate Experiences and Dialogues

When analyzing Concrete and Madí production, I have privileged, as the frame of interpretation, situations which the artists, most probably, experienced first-hand and

intensely in the place and period where they created their works and texts. Throughout this study, I allow various events occurring in this period and place to become significant only if I can identify them as ‘immediate experiences’ lived by the artists. In this study, the term ‘immediate experiences’ refers to social experiences that were lived, both closely and intensely, by large groups of people in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s—groups which the Concrete and Madí artists were part of. To link the artists to these experiences, I bring up their biographical information or information about their documented contacts with other persons or groups. This information allows me to infer their insertion within larger groups—a social class, literary circles, a political party, cultural institutions, and others. Other information I gather from secondary sources indicates that, in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s, these larger groups were experiencing various events closely and intensely—i.e., in a direct and immediate manner. Considering the artists as members of these larger groups, therefore, allows me to think of them as persons who were also experiencing the same events in the same manner.

One immediate experience for a large portion of the Argentine population of the early 1940s was the increased availability of books and magazines, which was coupled with a largely literate population and with the rising social pressures to become informed beyond formal higher education. Historians Luis Alberto Romero and Leandro Gutiérrez have shown that, beginning in the late 1930s and through the mid-1950s, the Argentine market experienced a boom in publishing activities, primarily as the result of the Spanish civil war—a boom which made reading materials abundant and varied, with subjects ranging from art, literature, politics, science, psychoanalysis, music, fashion, and health.

Meanwhile, the educational and social changes experienced in Argentine society between the mid-1920s and the mid-1940s created a new lower middle class that was able and willing to consume these reading materials. In chapter 2, I argue that the young people who published *Arturo* were members of the lower middle class that Gutiérrez and Romero describe. As such, they were able to enjoy the widespread availability of reading materials that circulated by the early 1940s.

Another immediate experience for the young publishers of *Arturo* was the enthusiasm among vast sectors of the Argentine population concerning the defeat of Nazism and Fascism in Europe. The poetry published in *Arturo* included a few statements which reveal their authors' opinions concerning the war. Furthermore, *Arturo's* publishers were involved with literary circles that did not hesitate to verbalize their perception of the European events in editorials and front-page articles. These circles depicted Nazism as evil, as a form of ignorance, as barbaric, dark, and socially regressive. At the same time, they characterized the forces of "democracy" (meaning the Allied powers) as sources of goodness, knowledge and development, civilization, light, and social advance. When an obscure military group took the Argentine national government by force in June 1943, these literary groups also began to portray the new government policies as forms of evil, darkness, ignorance, and barbarism, while they envisioned the country's expected return to democracy as forms of development and social advance. In chapter 3, I argue that the *Arturo* artists lived these events closely and that, like the journal's motto "invention against automatism" constructed a polarity

between reason and irrationality, the journal echoed the debates put forth by the literary circles they frequented.

Beginning in late 1944 and through 1948, a third experience became immediate for the Argentine population: the growing popularity of Juan Domingo Perón. One of the members of the military group that had seized the national government in June 1943, Colonel Perón soon gained followers with his policies of “social justice” while acting as Secretary of Labor and Social Security. On this platform, he also became president in June 1946. As president, he continued to put into practice his corporativist idea of social justice, coupling it with an emphasis on militarism and Catholicism. In chapter 4, I argue that it was almost impossible for the Argentine population in the second part of the 1940s to remain aloof from “Peronism,” as the epoch came to be called. Perón extensively used the mass media (radio, printed media, street images, and later, television), thus guaranteeing that every member of Argentine society was aware of his social policies. Like other intellectuals, the socially-concerned Concrete and Madí artists could not have been immune to this experience. Indeed, the Concrete artists’ emphasis in the revolutionary mission of non-representational art is in a stark contrast to Perón’s notion that political propaganda must evoke sentiment in order to attract the workers’ attention. Meanwhile, the Madí artists’ lack of interest in the photographic medium also suggests that they were aware that photography—amply used as a vehicle for Peronist propaganda—can play a key role in political propaganda.

In the early 1950s, Peronism continued to prevail as an immediate experience for the Argentine population. Yet as Argentina’s economy began to crumble and Perón

increasingly encountered opposition, political propaganda acquired new characteristics. Peronist propaganda became very simplified, extremely legible, and boringly repetitious. It also entered the most basic spaces of everyday life, as simplified portraits of Perón and his wife, Eva Perón, were printed on currency, stamps, and children's school materials, given out as prizes in championships and contests, and printed in popular magazines. At this time, the Peronist government also began to invoke the notion that government services were efficient, as it built so-called modernist and fundamentally functionalist architectural structures. In doing so, the Peronist government both appropriated the rhetoric of efficiency and readiness to serve the public that earlier governments had already developed, and it also echoed the international trend towards architectural standardization of the 1950s. In chapter 5, I argue that a number of specific Concrete and Madí writings and works of art from the 1950s demonstrates the artists' reactions to these Peronist developments.

Describing the artists as persons who lived these experiences in an immediate manner is useful because, eventually, it enables me to analyze Concrete and Madí artistic production as a response to these experiences. With this in mind, I analyze a selection of Concrete and Madí writings and works of art as a response to texts and objects which the artists would have encountered as part of these experiences: a number of books published in Argentina by Spanish emigres and other local writers, statements concerning the doom of Nazism and Fascism, texts and images of Peronist propaganda, buildings constructed during the Peronist years, and others. As I articulate relationships between the artists' production and other texts and objects circulating in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s, I use

the term ‘dialogue’—a term which suggests an analogy or an opposition between two or more cultural objects. Thus, I speak of a ‘dialogue’ when I describe analogies between, for example, certain texts published in the journal *Arturo* and a book by Adolfo Bioy Casares, or between a Madí work of art and a Madí musical score. I also speak of a ‘confrontational dialogue’ when I create a contrast between a particular cut-out frame created by a Concrete artist and a particular piece of Peronist propaganda. I prefer the term dialogue because it suggests a ‘horizontal’ relationship, i.e., a relationship where there are no hierarchies. In other words, I do not wish to imply, for example, that a book by Bioy Casares influenced *Arturo*, or that *Arturo* appropriated Bioy Casares’ text, but that I, as a historian, can infer certain relationships between these objects, based on the relationship between the makers of the objects. Accordingly, my goal is not to prove that these dialogues actually ‘occurred’ or that my analysis is the only possible or the correct one, but to construct, in a historical manner, a number of situations in which certain events are likely to have occurred and in which certain interpretations are possible.

I developed the notion of ‘immediate experience’ in order to accommodate the various historical events that I wanted to discuss in this study. In all honesty, this owed to the fact that, although the various theoretical texts I discuss at the end of this introduction had a profound impact in my conceptualization of Concrete and Madí art, none fully accommodated the range of phenomena I wanted to address. Furthermore, the notion of ‘immediate experience’ serves to shorten the apparent distance between the artists and their social context, and ultimately, between the context and the artists’ production. Using it, I seek to avoid two interpretations of Concrete and Madí art which I find problematic.

The first is the suggestion—present in exhibition catalogs and in some recent scholarship—that regards the historical context as providing countless stimuli, regardless of how these stimuli could have reached the artists. The second is the opposite assumption: that Concrete and Madí artists responded only to the works and ideas of other artists—in other words, that artists only talk with other artists. This latter operative assumption is put to work in histories of Concrete and Madí art which focus on the internal chronology of the movements, since they tend to paint a picture in which the artists appear as hermetically sealed off from extra-artistic experiences. Meanwhile, the notion of ‘dialogue’ allows me to construct contextualized interpretations of Concrete and Madí production—in other words, to discuss the works of art as fully responding to situations that their makers lived during the time and the place when they existed. My own contextualized interpretations of the journal *Arturo*, and of Concrete and Madí paintings, sculptures, texts, and music are, indeed, the original contribution of this dissertation, coupled with my conceptualization that the artists acted in response to experiences they lived in an immediate manner. As a whole, I believe that this kind of analysis is valuable because it helps us understand how the marginal Concrete and Madí objects and texts find a niche in larger events and debates.

My use of primary sources in this study deserves an explanation. To my knowledge, all the existing primary documents directly linked to the history of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención, the Madí Group, and most documents pertaining the history of the later Concrete artists have been surveyed already, and my interviews with the artists did not yield significant new findings. While I initially looked—often

fruitlessly—for several missing documents mentioned in the artists' writings or mentioned by the artists in the course of interviews, I eventually came to realize that my interest was not to uncover documentation of this nature. Working in this direction, in fact, only would have added very small details to already well-researched histories. My interest was, instead, to expand the existing primary documentation by widening its range, so that new interpretations of Concrete and Madí production would come to the fore. In this study, then, I regard every text, object, propaganda image, newspaper article, building, or music score that I discuss as a legitimate and relevant primary source, because these sources, in my interpretations, are capable of generating new meanings for Concrete and Madí art.

This is not to say that I use primary sources uncritically. As discussed above, a large number of original Madí and Concrete works are lost, and many of the Madí and Concrete paintings and sculptures owned by collectors and currently exhibited may not be authentic or may have been tampered with in different ways. The most complete and reliable corpus of Madí and Concrete works exists only in reproductions published in primary sources, i.e., in photographs that appeared in artists' journals (*Arte Madí Universal* (1947-1954), the *Revista Arte-Concreto* (1946), and *Nueva Visión* (1951-1957)). In view of this, when discussing a work of art in depth, I use works which were reproduced in these publications and, consequently, the reader will find that I often analyze art reproductions which illustrate works that no longer exist. For works I mention only briefly or as general examples, however, I tend to use recent photographs of works owned by museums and private collections, regardless of whether these works are

documented in primary sources or not. This is only because recent color photographs make good art reproductions, as opposed to the poor quality of xerox copies made from primary sources which I collected as I researched.

The second problem with the works of art and their reproductions concerns the impossibility of dating them accurately. Many of the works simply cannot be securely dated due to a lack of reliable documentation.⁵⁰ Since I rely on the artists' journals as the main source from which to study the works, I use the dates in the journal issues that include a reproduction of a particular work as the working date for that work. For example, while in some secondary sources Fig. 2 is dated "1946," I date it as of "ca. 1948" because a reproduction of it was published in the second issue of *Arte Madí Universal*, which dated October 1948. I have also faced the challenge of responsibly handling retrospective statements by the artists, many of whom are still alive. While, for reasons explained above, many of these statements cannot be taken at face value, they are nevertheless interesting and suggestive of the artists' interaction with other artists, cultural figures, and ideas. Therefore, I have critically examined these statements, using them as hints to guide my research but choosing not to take them at face value.

My approach to Concrete and Madí art may be regarded as interdisciplinary since throughout this study, I discuss literature, international political history, Argentine political and cultural history, political propaganda, architectural history, the mass media, and music history. The approach itself is justified by the fact that Madí and Concrete artists themselves approached art making in this way. "Madí," for example, sought to encompass painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry, music, and it made political or at

least ideological declarations. Similarly, the Concrete artists befriended and shared events with architects, poets, sculptors, musicians, and were affiliated with the Argentine Communist party. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that the experiences of the Madí and the Concrete artists that I bring to the fore involve my delving into different disciplines. Related to this approach is the extensive use of secondary sources this study displays. I use secondary sources both as frames of interpretation for historical situations, and sometimes as sources of primary information. As I planned and wrote the dissertation, I was fully—at times painfully—aware that I had little expertise and often few resources to conduct primary research in Argentine literature, Peronist architecture, serial music, political propaganda, or cultural, political, and economic history. On the other hand, there exist various excellent studies that deal with these topics, and therefore, I have felt entitled to use them, and often the sources they cite, in order to produce original interpretations of Concrete and Madí productions.

I have also made meaningful choices regarding the names with which I address the artists. Throughout this dissertation, I call the artists' groups by the names they called themselves, as opposed to using other names that, though suggestive of valid interpretations of these groups, contribute to readily linking them with European art ("Abstract," "Constructivist," "Geometric," "avant-garde"). Through the first three chapters, I refer to the subject of my study as the journal "*Arturo*" and to the "the *Arturo* artists." "The *Arturo* artists" include the editors of *Arturo* (Arden Quin, Kosice, Bailey, and Rothfuss) and Maldonado and Prati, who also made significant contributions and later founded the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención. With the name "the *Arturo*

artists,” I wish to suggest that even though the figures that published and contributed to the journal did not constitute an organized group and did not have a group program, they still shared enough of the same interests and preoccupations to be regarded as having a common identity.

In subsequent chapters, I use the names “Concrete art” or “the Concrete artists”—an English translation of “*Concreto*”—and “Madí art” or “the Madí artists.” With the phrase “the Concrete artists,” I wish to refer both to the artists who were members of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención, and to the artists who, after the dissolution of the Asociación in 1948, continued to call themselves “the Concrete artists” [“los artistas Concretos”]. During the period of the Asociación, the artists repeatedly spoke of “Concrete art” [“el arte concreto”] and “the Concrete artists” [“los artistas concretos”], but they also called their manifesto “Inventionist Manifesto” [“Manifiesto Invencionista”], their poetry “poetic invention” [“invención poética”], and the music they fostered “inventionist music” [“música invencionista”].⁵¹ In view of this, my choice to use the term “Concrete” [“Concreto”] deserves some discussion. The fact that the artists used the term “Concreto” may be seen as an indication that they simply adhered to the precepts of the Art Concret group founded by Theo van Doesburg in Paris in 1930, which the Argentine artists surely knew about.⁵² Their frequent use of the term “invención,” on the other hand, may be seen as an expression of their desire to maintain their independence from the European precedent, since the European Art Concret did not incorporate this term. In any event, it seems evident that while the allusion to Van Doesburg’s Art Concret may have been at work to some degree, the artists’ use of the

term “Concrete” is much more strongly linked to their very prevalent Marxist leanings. Maldonado, for example, stated that “[t]he true realist art does not seek to reflect, but to invent. Furthermore, to copy reality is not to affirm it; only the inventive attitude, in affirming the concrete, neither invalidates nor diminishes the world.”⁵³ The *Manifiesto Invencionista*, furthermore, stated that “Concrete art accustoms [us] to the direct relationship with things, and not with fictions of things.”⁵⁴ Accordingly, “Concrete” meant ‘grounded in material reality’—the reality of the pictorial plane, for example—and, in this conception, “the concrete” could not contribute to foster people’s illusory relationship with reality.

As I see it, then, the use of the term “Concrete” was ideological in nature—not a mere indication of the artists’ adherence to Van Doesburg’s movement—and I prefer “Concrete” as the name of this group precisely because this name transpires the artists’ Marxist inclinations. In this respect, I differ from Pérez-Barreiro who, while also understanding the artists’ use of the term “concreto” as an indication of their Marxist beliefs, prefers the term “invencionismo.” The use of the term “invencionismo,” he argues, predated the use of “concrete” because the artists first developed it in relation to literature, which was their initial concern.⁵⁵ With the dissolution of the *Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención* around 1948, however, the artists’ Marxist leanings became less evident.⁵⁶ During this second period, several artists—especially Maldonado, Hlito, Prati, and Iommi—continued to use the term “Concreto” to refer to themselves and their works. Yet at this point, their continued use of the term probably alluded to their newfound

enthusiasm about the production of the Swiss artists Max Bill, Richard Paul Lhose, and others, who also called themselves and their art “Concrete.”

The phrase “the Madí artists” refers to the artists who were members of the Argentine Madí group founded in 1946 and which continued to exist until around 1957. Even though Arden Quin was a member of the Madí group at the moment of its foundation, I do not discuss his works because he left the group very early. Finally, while I differentiate between “the Concrete artists” and “the Madí artists,” I generally refer to the two artists’ groups simultaneously (“the Concrete and the Madí artists”). In this way, I wish to suggest that, rather than concentrating on what makes these groups different from one another, I focus on the groups’ many shared attitudes and on their simultaneous interaction with experiences they lived in an immediate manner in Buenos Aires between 1940 and 1955.

Some Methodological Sources

In thinking about the particular case of ‘Concrete and Madí art,’ a number of texts helped me conceptualize relationships between objects and context. One such text was Dick Hebdige’s *Subcultures: The Meaning of Style*.⁵⁷ In this book, Hebdige studies the British “subcultures” of the 1970s, especially Punks. He argues that the characteristic objects and practices of these subcultural groups—dress, appearance, language, ritual occasions, styles of interaction, music—are pregnant with meaning, and that they constitute a coherent “style.” According to Hebdige, these objects function semantically in two ways. First, they are the oblique expression of the subcultures’ challenge to

hegemony—oblique because this challenge is not articulated directly (through a political revolution, for example) but signified via objects and habits that confront other objects put forth by hegemonic culture. Secondly, these objects constitute a coherent style in which every object is semantically identical to others despite the fact that these objects take very different forms: for example, a safety pin (used by punks to pierce body parts) has the same semantic status as a swear word, since both objects used by the same group challenge the sense of propriety of the dominant culture. For my purposes, Hebdige's text was useful because it provided a model in which concrete objects are interpreted as sites where symbolic cultural and political struggles take place. Admittedly, Concrete and Madí objects and texts are not the mundane objects which Hebdige addresses, nor can the Concrete and Madí artists be considered a subcultural group. On the other hand, Concrete and Madí artists did seek to antagonize the established artistic culture and held radical political ideas, while the objects and texts they produced continue to elude and resist interpretation.

Because of these parallels, Hebdige's text was useful in various ways. As I explained above, some of the scholarship on Concrete and Madí art has concentrated on constructing chronological histories of events or on the artists' relationship with institutions but, as a whole, Concrete and Madí production has not been the focus of interpretation. In this respect, Hebdige provided a model in which this production could become the focus without losing sight of the context. In the fourth and fifth chapters, for example, I argue that there is an unspoken antagonism between how the Concrete and Madí artists conceived of the role of images, and Perón's ideas about the role of images.

While this unspoken antagonism takes place at the level of declarations, Hebdige's text suggested an analysis in which this antagonism could be explored at the level of objects. In other words, it allowed me to envision Concrete and Madí works and texts as dialoguing with objects put forth by the Peronist government. Thus, I describe confrontational dialogues between, for example, a Concrete painting and an example of Peronist propaganda, and a Madí architectural model and an example of Peronist architecture. Secondly, guided by Hebdige's model, I render Concrete and Madí objects as significant by making them equivalent to other manifestations created either by the Concrete and the Madí artists, or by other cultural figures or groups. For example, I regard Madí painting as equivalent to a Madí poem, or a Concrete "coplanal" as equivalent to the musical ideas of the Concrete artists. Following Hebdige's model, I purposefully treat all types of Concrete and Madí production as equal, i.e., as deserving of the same level of attention, as opposed to privileging their visual production per se. This approach, indeed, is historically grounded since the Concrete and Madí artists produced works of art simultaneously with journals and manifestos, poetry, music, and architectural plans. To neglect the portions of their production which are not painting or sculpture, therefore, would significantly reduce the network of meanings that the artists probably intended.

Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* was also useful for conceptualizing the dialogues between Concrete and Madí objects, and Peronist objects. Barthes brings up the concept of the naturalized image (or text) as a myth, a construction, and not as a natural occurrence.⁵⁸ Based on Saussure's linguistic understanding of the sign as the arbitrary

unity of the signifier and the signified, Barthes proposes that myth is a second-level semiological system, in which the sign becomes the signifier of a second sign, which he calls “signification” or “myth.” The signified of the second system adheres to the second signifier from “outside,” that is, from history. Myth, then, is a type of speech which communicates; it is a sort of social usage which is added to pure matter, and its very principle is that it appears to transform history into nature because it is neither a lie nor a confession, but an inflexion. The receiver of a particular myth somehow ‘senses’ that the myth is a construction, but cannot completely grasp it as such because the myth seems to confirm reality—to make it evident. Barthes’s model, including the illuminating examples of myth analysis he provides in the first part of the book, is therefore a re-politicizing tool for objects that appear as normalized, such as certain propagandistic photographs that the Peronist government circulated and which I analyze in this study.

The argument I develop in chapter 2 is based on a notion which I call ‘resignification.’ By resignification I refer to a situation in which various seemingly different terms refer to an interrelated set of meanings. I speak of a resignification between three polarities: that contained in *Arturo*’s motto, “invention against automatism,” and two other sets of terms which I trace through literary journals known to *Arturo*’s contributors: “Nazism” against “democracy,” and “civilization” against “barbarism.” I argue that these sets of polarized terms can be read as resignifications of one another because all three were developed as part of the same experiences—experiences that were lived in an immediate manner by the *Arturo* artists and the other literary groups. The notion of ‘resignification’ owes, in part, to a text by Roland Barthes,

“Style and its image.”⁵⁹ Here, Barthes refers to style as “a citational process.” He proposes that any text is a multiplicity of forms without content. In attempting to interpret a text or an art piece, each level of interpretation is never the last because the codes are never exhausted. The work contains no irreducible kernel but only layers of interpretative systems that keep on calling each other. Barthes’s text, in sum, is useful because in it he characterizes meaning (of texts or works of art, for example) not as essentially located in texts or objects but as constantly “citing” other texts and objects. In this situation, I interpret each of the three sets of polarized terms I analyze as implicit allusions to one another. In my interpretation, they give each other meaning as they keep calling each other.

Louis Althusser’s “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” was useful because the author illuminates how institutionalized practices, in themselves, reproduce ideology.⁶⁰ Althusser’s thesis in this text is that ideology has a material existence. An ideology, he argues, always exists in an apparatus (or a system), and it always exists in its practice or practices (such as laws, habits, or rituals practiced in this system). Althusser gives the example of institutionalized religion, and argues that ideological subjects do not kneel following their individual religious beliefs but that they acquire religious beliefs in the practice of kneeling in the course of institutionalized rituals. Althusser’s example can be extended to many other situations in which ideology becomes tangible in practices and objects. Thus, subjects become patriotic in the act of raising the flag, or become indoctrinated to conform to social norms and hold certain beliefs in the process of acquiring an education, or define their gender in the act of dressing in distinct ways, and

many others. Althusser's text was key to help me, as a historian, conceptualize propagandistic Peronist objects and rituals (coins, stamps, trophies, textbooks, chants, posters, key chains) as the material sites of an ideology that, over half-a-century ago, interpellated Argentine people while these people were manipulating these objects—as opposed to perceiving them as images that merely record a long-gone time period.

Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" (1944), documents how Marxist intellectuals writing in the 1930s and 40s felt in view of the seemingly unbeatable capitalist system and the 'vulgarization' of culture that this system stimulated.⁶¹ The authors connect cultural commodification and vulgarization with loss of individual creativity, with the use of 'like-life' images and themes that seek to make the viewer indifferent to his or her oppressed situation. They make a critical analysis of what they call "the culture industry" or the concept of culture as an industrial product distributed by the mass media. The culture industry is a business (rather than a spontaneous cultural production) that certain sectors in society (the bourgeoisie) make and distribute through radio, film, television, and magazine publication. The authors also point out that the culture industry robs individuals of any creative or interpretative capacity because its products cater to statistics rather than to real individuals, and because they are purposefully "like" the reality of the consumers. Thus, the culture industry prevents individuals from detaching themselves from their alienated lives. Finally, the authors criticize the aesthetic propounded by the culture industry as an aesthetic of effects, of obvious touch and technical detail rather than of the work itself. Adorno and Horkheimer's argument is particularly revealing with respect to the feeling

of de-individualization and undifferentiated response that mass culture elicited, and thus, they provided me with ways to analyze Tomás Maldonado's 1950s's views on communication and on the culturally politicized role of the avant-garde. While I acknowledge the historical distance that separates Adorno & Horkheimer's text from Maldonado's writings, this was still a useful source to give direction to my investigation.

Organization

The dissertation is organized in two parts. The first three chapters address different aspects of the journal *Arturo*. In the first chapter, I revise possible readings of the journal's statements, and I reassess the possible impact of Torres-García, Huidobro, Stern, and Fontana in its formation. In the second chapter, I address possible textual sources for *Arturo* in publications by Spanish emigres and in a selection of works by Argentine writers. In the third chapter, I contextualize *Arturo*'s statements within debates about the outcome of World War II which I trace through a selection of literary journals. Part II focuses on Concrete and Madí works, texts, and music created or published between 1946 and 1955. In the first chapter within part II (chapter 4), I address Concrete and Madí works in the context of the popularization of Perón during 1945 and 1948. In chapter 5, I discuss another selection of works as reactions to Peronist propaganda and to the architecture sponsored by the Peronist government during the first part of the 1950s. Finally, in chapter 6 I discuss a selection of Concrete and Madí works in relation to the ideas of musicians that were associated with the groups. In the conclusion, I evaluate the themes that consistently appear through the dissertation.

PART I

ARTURO

CHAPTER 1

Some problems with *Arturo*: review and assessment

The now-legendary journal *Arturo*, published in Buenos Aires in 1944, today is considered the key statement that signaled the beginning of Concrete and Madí art in Argentina.⁶² The publication's major innovation was that its pages declared, for the first time among Argentine artists, the notion that art's worth resided in its status as an entity completely divorced from the observation of nature and from subjective feeling. *Arturo*, in any event, not only attacked the conventional ways to understand artistic representation but its editors and central contributors also differentiated from other contemporary artists in that they did not pursue the traditional ways to obtain an artistic education and to attain prestige in the art world. They either chose to not attend or dropped out of the traditional art schools, disregarding the training for making art and turning to literary expressions instead. Arden Quin and Kosice, for example, did not study art but briefly attended the School of Humanities at the Universidad de Buenos Aires. Maldonado was a student at the National Academy of Fine Arts but did not complete his studies, while Rothfuss attended the Círculo de Bellas Artes de Montevideo for only three years. The artists also never participated in state-sponsored competitions, i.e., national, provincial, or municipal salons, which were the traditional avenue to obtain prestige, visibility, grants, and other monetary prizes.⁶³ They also did not travel to Europe until later in their careers. It is no exaggeration to say, then, that the *Arturo* artists established themselves as pariahs within the Argentine art world.

Only one issue of *Arturo* appeared and, according to Kosice, nobody took any notice of it.⁶⁴ Indeed, there is no documented evidence of any kind of reception of these artists' ideas until after they launched their first exhibitions in 1946. *Arturo* consisted of an assemblage of essays, poems, and art reproductions. The table of contents defined the publication as a "journal of abstract arts" which would appear four times a year. The single issue contained untitled essays by three of the editors—Arden Quin, Kosice, and Bailey—and Rothfuss's "El marco: un problema de plástica actual" ["The frame: a current plastic problem"]. A last essay was "Con respecto a una futura creación literaria," ["With respect to a future literary creation"] by the Uruguyan artist Joaquín Torres-García. There were also poems by the Chilean poet Huidobro, the Brazilian poet Murilo Mendes, and by Kosice, Bayley, Arden Quin, and Torres-García. The cover was a woodcut by Maldonado and the vignettes were by Prati. There were also art reproductions by Maldonado, Prati, Rothfuss, Torres-García, Augusto Torres, and by the Portuguese painter Vieira da Silva. Rothfuss's essay included illustrations of works by Mondrian and Kandinsky.

The essays published by Arden Quin, Bayley, and Kosice are very different but they share a few thematic threads. The first concerns the artists' opposition to the representation of nature and to personal expression, either through literary or visual means. Arden Quin argued that "[i]t is evident, then, that expression can no longer be what dominates the spirit of contemporary artistic composition, much less representation, either magic or of symbols."⁶⁵ Bayley criticized the fact that throughout the history of art "an image was [always] born as the sign of a personal, conceptual, or natural reality, etc,

but never as an independent and autonomous reality, as a true living entity.”⁶⁶ All three writers also believed that overcoming illusionism and representation was the groundbreaking step into a new and better personal and social reality. Kosice thus argued that “Abstract art. . . will guarantee the harmony of the polidimensional, without the need for psychical adaptations.”⁶⁷

Another recurrent subject in *Arturo* was the writers’ opposition to “onirism,” Surrealist “automatism,” and especially to the work of Salvador Dalí. Thus, Arden Quin wrote: “At the present moment, expressionism, oniric automatism, etc., bring nothing but backwardness and returns. And they must be torn out, abolished.”⁶⁸ Kosice stated that: “Yet this sheer onirism would lead to an even greater stupidity, since its only source would be a constant and systematic evasion.”⁶⁹ Finally, Bailey criticized Dalí saying that “There is also nothing with Dalí, whose art based on images that are copies of passed experiences imply only a reaction.”⁷⁰

The last feature which appears in *Arturo* is the defense of “invention.” Opening the journal, this term appears three times in the back cover (Fig. 27). There are two dictionary definitions, one which defined the act of inventing (“*inventar*”) and another which defined the result of inventing (“*invención*”). They read: “TO INVENT: To find or discover by means of ingenuity or meditation, or through sheer chance, a new or unknown thing./To find, imagine, create, his/her work the poet or the artist. INVENTION: Action and result of inventing./ Invented thing./ Finding.”⁷¹ Both definitions, thus, seemingly accepted that “invention” could entail various processes—meditation, chance, and finding—and, that the artists did not necessarily exclude the role

of unconscious thought or chance in the creative process. Immediately below, however, appeared the phrase “*invención contra automatismo*” [invention against automatism], which apparently contradicted the statements above because, in opposing invention against automatism, it excluded unconscious thought and chance from the act of inventing.

“Invention” is also defined throughout the essays. Bailey stated that:

Any preoccupation about representation, any willingness to turn the work of art into an interpreter of no matter which interior reality, of which subtle and new attitude, any symbolism, even if very diffuse, falsifies the image and deprives it of any aesthetic value. Today, novelty can reside in nothing but the image invention. Every realism is false, every expressionism is false, every romanticism is false.⁷²

With this statement, Bailey’s essay opposed the image-invention to representation, expression, and “interior reality,” and he seemingly contradicted the dictionary definitions. Finally, Arden Quin wrote that “[i]nvention implies first imagination flowering with all its contradictions; and then conscience ordering it and cleansing it from any naturalistic or representational image (even dreams), and from symbols (even subconscious).”⁷³ He therefore regarded “invention” as a creative method which began with automatic drawing or writing but which was then controlled by clarity and reason. Once again, this seems to challenge the dictionary definitions since he characterizes “invention” as a process that starts with uncontrolled expression but is then corrected by conscious control.

Many other contradictions are evident in *Arturo*. While the journal attacked onirism, Surrealist automatism, and figurative representation, the works of art included in the publication avoided neither figures nor gestural renderings. The most evident example

is Maldonado's cover (Fig. 28), in which spontaneity and gesture emerge very clearly. Furthermore, various other art reproductions allude to figures (for example, Fig. 29, Fig. 30, and Fig. 31)—except Prati's vignettes (Fig. 32, Fig. 33, Fig. 34), Maldonado's drawings (for example, Fig. 35), and Mondrian's and Kandinsky's illustrations (Fig. 36 and Fig. 37). The presence of figurative images in the journal seems to contradict the staunch anti-representational and anti-evocative stance declared by the artists in the essays. An impression of lack of structure also prevails in the journal's organization. While the table of contents (Fig. 38) neatly organizes the contributions placing the essays, the poems, and the art reproductions in separate categories, inside the unpaginated magazine all contributions appear in seemingly random order. The only exceptions are Torres-García's essay, poems, and drawing, which are placed consecutively.

Arturo's contradictions

The internal contradictions that are evident in *Arturo*—i.e., the inconsistent definitions of invention, plus the coexistence of gestural/figurative visual materials with strong declarations against Surrealism, automatism, and figurative representation—are puzzling. Can they be explained? Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro brings up the seemingly conflicting features of the dictionary definitions of “invention,” arguing that invention referred not to a creative method (as Arden Quin suggests) but to an inventive result. He thus states that “[i]nvention was to be an absolute quality, not a method with which to achieve a goal, as in Surrealism. By defining invention in the broadest terms, the artist was free to use chance, imagination or logical thought as means, as long as the result was

inventive.”⁷⁴ According to Pérez-Barreiro, the artists’ attack of Surrealism was more complex than it seemed at first. He argues that:

Surrealist automatism proposes the supremacy of the unconscious and explores the mechanisms through which the actions of the conscious mind can be diminished. If, however, invention can be the result of either logic, meditation or chance, it belongs as much to the conscious as to the unconscious world.⁷⁵

Arturo’s contradictions, however, may also be attributed to the experimental character of the publication and the anarchic characteristics of the editorial committee. Since *Arturo* did not have a single editor or an acknowledged leader, differences and even contradictions were bound to surface almost immediately—as they did, in fact, shortly after the journal was published. Secondly, the poems which Kosice, Bailey, and Arden Quin presented in *Arturo* were—if one is to follow the documented evidence—the first literary experiences they presented to the public. Even though Maldonado had published a “Manifiesto de los cuatro jóvenes” [“Manifesto by the four young men”] with three other artists in 1941, his drawings and the woodcut of the cover were also the first artistic output he is known to have shown, and Prati’s vignettes are the first drawings that are recorded by her.⁷⁶ It is not surprising, then, that in this situation the artists would have incurred inconsistencies. Finally, there may have existed practical problems with the collection of materials. Kosice claims that Maldonado turned in the print for the cover without much notice, and that the editors were forced to rush it to the printer to meet a deadline. Kosice thus implied that, had the editors seen the look of the woodcut earlier, they would not have accepted this image as the cover of their journal.⁷⁷

In any event, and in spite of the inconsistencies, the thematic thread that most clearly emerges in *Arturo* concerns the concepts which the artists opposed—

representation, illusionism, Surrealist automatism, and onirism. Above everything else, the artists' essays focus on their critique of these concepts, and "invention" emerges as everything that, in principle, they do not critique. Thus, "invention" comes to signify "novelty" (as opposed to the old),⁷⁸ "a pure image" (as opposed to representation or allusion to reality),⁷⁹ "control" and "reason" as opposed to "automatism" and "expression."⁸⁰ "Invention" signified everything that "automatism" did not imply—an interpretation which is rooted in the statement "invención contra automatismo" and in the arguments displayed by Kosice, Arden Quin, and Bailey. As I see it, the gestural and figurative illustrations, the broad dictionary definitions, and the inconsistent organization owe not to the fact that the artists contemplated an all-inclusive definition of invention but to the experimentation and the mishaps that characterized the publication of *Arturo*.

Even though the preoccupation with defining "invention" as a positive concept barely surfaces in *Arturo*, this concern became central for the artists immediately after the journal was out. In 1945, it found its material expression in the plaquettes *Invención 1*, published by Kosice, and *Invención 2*, published by Bailey—publications which, being planned by the volatile group but published individually, reveal the tensions between the artists which would explode in 1946 and afterwards. Yet in late 1943-early 1944, when the artists were collecting contributions and making practical decisions, the notion of "invention" was still very much associated with what the artists perceived as opposed to automatism, representation, and expression.

Arturo's sources

A second question which has repeatedly puzzled scholars concerns how the *Arturo* artists came to conceive of the general ideas that prevail in the journal. Regarding the nature of these ideas, there is no doubt that the journal's publishers were informed to some degree about the problems of Cubism, Surrealism, Neoplasticism, Russian Constructivism, Expressionism, Dada, and Surrealism, since they specifically cited these movements and others. Bailey, for example, stated that "Dadaism, Surrealism, *Creacionismo* set the bases for the conception of the new image."⁸¹ Rothfuss's essay also showed that he interpreted the history of modern art in formalist terms, as he wrote that: "It is this desire to express the reality of things that took painting to an ever more abstract aesthetic, as it moved from Futurism and culminated in the last epoch of Cubism, Non-Objective art, Neoplasticism, and also Constructivism in its abstract mode."⁸² Besides illustrating his essay with works by Mondrian and Kandinsky, Rothfuss also provided a direct quote by Guillaume Apollinaire; he cited specific textual sources, such as Gauguin's "Notes Eparces" and Guillaume Janneau's *Art Cubiste*. Since the *Arturo* artists did not travel to Europe until later in their careers, scholars have repeatedly wondered how they became aware of the European movements, what kind of information they obtained, and how they incorporated it into their own formulations. Many scholars argue that they were transmitted knowledge about European art through various individuals who had been active participants in the European avant-garde, and who were then living in Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile. These individuals were the Uruguayan painter Joaquín

Torres-García, the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro, the German photographer Grete Stern, and the Argentine-born sculptor Lucio Fontana.

Torres-García was born in Montevideo in 1874 but moved to Europe in 1898, where he became well acquainted with Theo Van Doesburg, Piet Mondrian, Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Pablo Picasso, Le Corbusier, Cesar Domela, and the Belgian critic Michel Seuphor.⁸³ In 1930, he founded the group and journal *Cercle et Carré* with Seuphor. Returning to Montevideo in 1934, he launched a campaign promoting his “Constructive art.” This included lecturing about the work of the European artists to whom he considered himself indebted—Cézanne, Picasso, Braque, Mondrian, Ozenfant, Gris, Hans Arp—and the trends which he admired—Post-Impressionism, Cubism and Neoplasticism. He even illustrated his lectures with lantern slides he made out of art reproductions published in the European art journals which he had brought from his sojourn. He eventually collected and published his lectures in a massive volume entitled *Universalismo Constructivo: Contribución a la Unificación del Arte y la Cultura en América* [*Constructive Universalism: Contribution to the Unification of Art and Culture in America*], published in Buenos Aires in 1944.⁸⁴ That Torres-García was exchanging ideas with the *Arturo* artists before and around 1944 is documented in two ways. First, the Uruguyan artist contributed poems, an essay, and a drawing to *Arturo*. Secondly, his diary contains ten succinct entries which record that, starting on March 1943 and through June 1944, some of the *Arturo* artists made several visits to his workshop in Montevideo. With nine entries, Rothfuss was by far the most frequent visitor, followed by Arden Quin, whose name he recorded three times. Maldonado also visited him once around the time of

Arturo's publication.⁸⁵ Torres-García's contribution to *Arturo* was probably negotiated in the course of these encounters.⁸⁶

Cristina Rossi has written an extensive critical article reporting on the conflicting accounts of the Concrete and Madí artists regarding the impact of Torres-García, and most importantly, on the circulation and reception of Torres-García's work and ideas in Buenos Aires in the early 1940s.⁸⁷ As Rossi shows, while just about every artist agrees that Torres-García's presence near Buenos Aires was important for *Arturo*, there is disagreement about what exactly Torres-García provided the artists with. Some artists and scholars perceive Torres-García's own work and ideas as an influence in the development of Concrete and Madí art. Alfredo Hlito acknowledged being influenced by Torres-García in his early career, and in 1945 he painted works which clearly resemble those of the Uruguayan artist (Fig. 39).⁸⁸ Manuel Espinosa, also left paintings from 1944 which clearly rely on Torres-García's use of the grid. Among the scholars, both Agnès de Maistre and Shelley Goodman describe the early years of Arden Quin as heavily influenced by Torres-García's ideas, via his interest in primitive art.⁸⁹ Torres-García's influence has also been implied by most exhibitions of Concrete and Madí art, in which museum or gallery visitors encounter works by Torres-García and sometimes by other members of the Asociación de Arte Constructivo as they enter the show and before they see any Concrete or Madí works.⁹⁰ The implication of this arrangement is that Torres-García's ideas and work, which were available since the mid-1930s to the Concrete and Madí artists in a neighboring country, were a relevant reference for the Argentine artists.

On the other hand, scholars such as Pérez-Barreiro, Gradowicz, and the artists Maldonado and Kosice disagree.⁹¹ They argue that Torres-García acted as a plentiful source of information about European art—through his own personal experience of the European avant-garde and his willingness to discuss it with young artists—but that his own work and ideas—i.e., his personal version of Constructivism, called Constructive Universalism—did not make an impact on the *Arturo* artists. They argue that Torres-García’s work was attached to a symbolic form of figuration which the artists apparently found too literary. In 1946, these differences with Torres-García became evident in a series of articles exchanged between *Revista de Arte Concreto* and *Removedor*, the journal of the Asociación de Arte Constructivo, led by Torres-García. In response to a series of attacks against Concrete and Madí art published in *Removedor*, Maldonado published an article entitled “Torres-García contra el arte moderno” [Torres-García against Modern Art’].⁹² He stated that:

Uruguyan so-called “Constructivism” is the typical example of an eclectic mix. In the Constructive works of Torres-García we find Cubism (bad Cubism), Impressionism, 19th century pastiche (especially that), and cheap symbolism (suns, pictographic dolls, little fish).⁹³

Maldonado also complained that Torres-García used the golden section as a compositional guide:

Both Torres-García’s so-called “Constructive art” and “painting” are made advocating the golden section. Attached to Pitagorean idealism, to the mystique of the number, to a philosophy from 2500 years ago, forgetting or ignoring the new conquests of modern science, Torres-García thus promotes a composition based exclusively on an arithmetic and a geometry from elementary school.⁹⁴

In 1946, both the Concrete and the Madí artists openly rejected the notion of the golden section because it implied an apriori standard in the process of creation—and

especially one which was associated with classical art. Inventions were to be true inventions, not guided by a given pattern or number. Defiantly, Maldonado wrapped up his essay stating: “The battle for an authentically modern art is, without a doubt, the battle for invention.”⁹⁵

As this statements show, in 1946 both the Concrete and the Madí artists no longer followed Torres-García’s ideas. Yet it should be noted that many tenets in *Arturo*, as they appeared in 1944, resonated with some of the ideas which appeared in *Universalismo Constructivo*, also published in 1944. Even though the printing of *Universalismo Constructivo* was finished shortly after *Arturo* was published⁹⁶—and therefore, the *Arturo* artists would not have had access to the book itself—it is likely that the ideas which Torres-García discussed with the artists during their encounters would have been those which would soon appear in this book. In most of the lectures that the Uruguyan artist published in this book, he pleaded for an art which rejected the imitation of nature and employed purely plastic means: lines, planes, and colors. He also supported and practiced an art which “excluded...that which is dramatic, expressiveness, the subjective, since this is the course through which the romanticist goes.”⁹⁷ It was this tendency to romanticism, he argued, that always led art to representation. Just like the editorial essays in *Arturo*, Torres-García stated that art was evolving, and that the only way for it to evolve was to abandon the representation of reality and subjective expression. Thus, he stated, “[t]hose who do not abandon the old rule of subjective expression and of *representation* for the sake of *representation* will not be in the evolved level of today.”⁹⁸ In a “lesson” written in 1941 but reprinted in *Universalismo Constructivo*—and eloquently entitled “Cubismo,

Neoplasticismo, Dadaísmo, Superrealismo frente al Universalismo Constructivo,” [“Cubism, Neoplasticism, Dadaism, Superrealism, facing Constructive Universalism”]—, Torres-García stated that Surrealism was “the aberration of the dark soul.”⁹⁹ He stated that Surrealism existed because Cubism had all too soon abandoned its revolutionary quest for order and geometry. He pleaded: “Against that disorder, order; against that sickness, health; against that decay, youth; against that seizing excitement, serenity.”¹⁰⁰ Torres-García’s views on Surrealism (at least as expressed in *Universalismo Constructivo*) were, in fact, very close to those manifested by the *Arturo* artists.

In the essay he contributed to *Arturo*, Torres-García’s description of the creative process of “construction” also largely paralleled the description that Arden Quin made of “invention.” As explained above, Arden Quin described “invention” as a process which moved from automatic writing or drawing to control and reason. Meanwhile, Torres-García stated that, in the first moment of creation, it was appropriate for the artist or the poet to “open the gates, let everything pass through. Everything except the sensible. Everything is welcome in the name of madness, in the name of free, uncontrolled, brave, and aggressive expression.”¹⁰¹ This first moment, he claimed, was key to eliminate “the bad habit of descriptive naturalism, which we must remove from our spirit.”¹⁰² After this moment, however, Torres-García called for the second moment, the moment of “construction.”¹⁰³ In this moment, he stated, artists must concentrate on the structure of what they were creating rather than on the individual parts of the object. Thus, he wrote: “[n]o longer the individual things but the rhythm in which they now are, which is the essence of poetic creation.”¹⁰⁴ The poems which Torres-García contributed to *Arturo*,

entitled “Divertimento” [Fun Piece] and “Divertimento II” [Fun Piece II], appeared at first sight to consist of images freely annotated as they were being thought out, because they did not have, as Torres-García put it, “a logical order,” i.e., semantic coherence.¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, the poems maintained a constant and agile rhythm, i.e., a structure, throughout their duration, which was created by constantly substituting some elements in the rhyme while maintaining others. A given section in “Divertimento” read, for example:

Las **luces** **astrales**
y los **avestruces**
son cosas **iguales**.
Las cosas **iguales** me causan pavor.
Diez **dientes**
diez **dedos**
las cosas **iguales fatales**.
El **aspero yeso**
y el barniz **espeso**
la brea
el **lacre**
y **lacre** de alacran
son.¹⁰⁶

In this poem, there is no systematic rhyme or measured verse, but Torres-García maintains a rhythm by repeating sounds, syllables, and diphthongs. At the same time, he constantly breaks the semantic coherence of the verses. The poem is, therefore, equivalent to a painting that avoids representing the natural world but which maintains an inner structure. While it is possible that the author initially organized the words by chance, it is evident that throughout the poem he maintained a vigilant attitude by purposefully repeating sounds within short and discontinuous verses. In maintaining a

corrective attitude to the products of chance, Torres-García echoed the process which Arden Quin described as “invention.”

On the other hand, a close comparison of the above-quoted fragment of Torres-García’s poem and any of the poems that Kosice or Bailey submitted to *Arturo* shows important differences. Kosice’s “Densidad del Paisaje Abandonado” [“Density of the Abandoned Landscape”], for example, read:

“Clase de mapas y límites” (descriptiva)
Jeroglífico ontogenia
Algunos peldaños
Captura al nivel del juicio
Inmensa cercanía civilizada
Gratis¹⁰⁷

The poems by the *Arturo* artists have much less of an internal structure than those by Torres-García, which, in comparison, seem ruled by the repetition of few but detectable common patterns. These different poetic notions, perhaps, were an early symptom of the bitter criticisms that the *Arturo* artists would make about Torres-García’s use of the golden section two years later, and, ultimately, of the significant differences that exist between Torres-García’s Constructive Universalism and Concrete and Madí art.

A second figure who was known to the *Arturo* artists was Vicente Huidobro. Born in Chile in 1893, Huidobro first discussed his aesthetic of *Creacionismo* in 1912 and developed it throughout the 1920s and 30s. He stated that a poem is “a thought so alive that, like a plant’s spirit, has its own architecture; it adorns nature as a new thing.”¹⁰⁸ Between 1916 and 1932, Huidobro alternatively resided in Paris and Madrid, with a few brief visits to Chile. In Europe, he was actively involved with various avant-garde circles at different times, among which he created and promoted *Creacionismo*. In 1917, he

founded the journal *Nord-Sud* with Pierre Reverdy and Max Jacob, and became friends with Pablo Picasso and Jacques Lipchitz. In 1918, he regularly attended Ramón Gómez de la Serna's *tertulia* at El Pombo. In 1920, he supported the purist line promoted by *L'Esprit Nouveau*'s founders, Ozenfant and Jeanneret. In April 1921, he founded *Creación/Creation*, a journal of all the arts with its contents written in various languages. In 1925, at a public conference at La Sorbonne, he attacked Surrealism and Breton's automatic writing, and in 1931, he published his most important poem, *Altazor*. Back in Chile in 1932, he corresponded with Torres-García (living in Uruguay since 1934).

That the *Arturo* artists knew Huidobro's work is clearly documented in the journal in several ways. First, Rothfuss made a statement using a direct quotation by Huidobro:

At this moment, when it seems that the artist is furthest from nature, Vicente Huidobro will say: "Never has man been closest to nature than now that he tries not to imitate it in its appearances but does as it [nature] does, [he] imitates it in its deep constructive laws, in the realization of the whole [*un todo*] inside the mechanism of production of new forms."¹⁰⁹

Bailey also praised *Creacionismo* in his essay, as he stated: "Dadaism, Surrealism, Creacionismo, when they give pure images, without worrying about their agreement [the images'] with external realities, set the bases for the conception of the new image. This is the most important aesthetic idea of the time we are living."¹¹⁰ Finally, *Arturo* included a poem by Huidobro ("A woman dances her dreams"). Kosice states that to obtain this poem, he went to the Chilean consulate in Buenos Aires seeking Huidobro's address in Chile, so as to ask him to submit a contribution.¹¹¹

Pérez-Barreiro has argued that Huidobro's ideas were an important influence for the *Arturo* artists. Because in 1944 the *Arturo* artists were primarily concerned with

poetic creation, Huidobro's poems provided them with a Spanish-language model which was an alternative to Surrealism—"a model of verbal invention without either the random or destructive elements of Dada poetry nor the pretensions of Surrealism to express the subconscious."¹¹² Pérez-Barreiro detects the influence of Huidobro's poetic style in the poems that Arden Quin, Kosice, and Bailey published in *Arturo*, and also argues that there are remarkable similarities between Huidobro's concept of *Creacionismo* and *Arturo*'s concept of invention, as developed by Arden Quin, Bayley, and Kosice in their editorial essays. As explained above, this scholar characterizes the concept of "invention" not as a technique or a process that necessarily included or excluded either unconscious thought or control, but as a poem or object in which the absolute quality of invention prevailed. In this respect, Pérez-Barreiro finds that "Huidobro's insistence on creation as an absolute value, independent of a technique or style" is very similar to *Arturo*'s concept of invention.¹¹³ In a less specific interpretation, it seems evident that the *Arturo* artists admired the Chilean poet because of his renown as a poet of the first avant-garde who insisted, like they did, that art must be different from nature. It also seems likely that they sought Huidobro's contribution not only because he was a valid referent but also because he spoke their language, lived in a neighboring country, and was thus easy to reach.

Mario Gradowczyk, Nelly Perazzo, and Adriana Lauría have suggested (though not explicitly argued) that Grete Stern, German photographer and former Bauhaus student living in Argentina in the 1940s, acted as a source of information about the European movements for the *Arturo* artists.¹¹⁴ In 1927 and 1928, Stern studied privately with Walter Perterhans, and in 1932 she studied with him at the Bauhaus in Dessau. In 1936, she and

her husband Horacio Coppola moved to Argentina, where Stern developed an active career as a professional and commercial photographer. Kosice has stated that, upon meeting Stern in 1945, he had someone translate the German Bauhaus books which she had brought from Dessau.¹¹⁵ Contacts between Stern and the *Arturo* artists dating to 1945 are documented in an announcement and a photograph of the exhibition held at Stern's house in Ramos Mejía (Fig. 40). The photograph shows most of the *Arturo* artists mingled with a larger crowd at Stern's house. I would like to note, however, that this document dates to 1945, that is, the year following *Arturo*'s publication; that there is no evidence that Stern was in contact with the *Arturo* artists before 1945; and that none of the artists claim that they met Stern before 1945. In 1943, the *Arturo* artists would have been able to see Stern's own work at an exhibition she held at the Müller Gallery in Buenos Aires, but I am inclined to believe that they would have found her work far too realist (in the broad sense of the term). At this exhibition, Stern showed head portraits (for example, Fig. 41 and Fig. 42) which critic Luis Priamo has called "classical" for their simplicity and neutrality.¹¹⁶ While these portraits could be considered 'modern' for their emphasis on form, and for their lack of anecdotal or superficial context, it is unlikely that the *Arturo* artists would have regarded them as "inventions," since Stern's main objective was to capture the human head and the singular features of the individual represented.

Last but not least, some scholars have also explored the implications that Lucio Fontana's presence in Buenos Aires between 1940 and 1947 may have had for the development of Argentine Abstract art. Born in Argentina in 1899, Fontana moved to Milan at six years of age, returned to Argentina at twenty-three, and then went back to

Milan in 1927. Throughout these formative years, he received training as a sculptor in very varied settings: technical, commercial, and academic. In 1934, he experimented with abstract sculptures (for example, Fig. 43) and in 1935 he signed a manifesto with the Milanese Concrete Group and exhibited with it at the First Collective Show of Italian Abstract Art in Turin. The same year, he was also part of *Abstraction/Creation. Art non Figuratif 35*, and his work was exhibited next to works by Kandinsky, Bill, László Moholy-Nagy, Georges Vantongerloo, Kurt Seligmann, and Auguste Herbin. A recent catalog states that “already in the first part of the 1930s, Fontana appears at the center of the artistic quests of the European avant-garde, between figuration and non-figuration.”¹¹⁷ Returning to Argentina in 1940, where he would stay until 1947, he assiduously and very successfully participated in very varied artistic settings, submitting works to salons, accepting public commissions, and teaching.¹¹⁸ His production from this period, however, may be described as an expressionist kind of figurative sculpture (for example, Fig. 44), and except for its emphasis on the textures and qualities of materials, it is very different from the abstract or concrete sculpture he had produced and exhibited in Europe in the 1930s. In 1946, while teaching at the Escuela Altamira (a non-traditional art school), his students signed the Manifesto Blanco [White Manifesto], which Fontana (who did not sign) claimed to have inspired and supported.

In an interview held in 1989, Maldonado claimed that he and other Concrete artists used to have long and spirited arguments with Fontana, in which they accused him of artistic conservatism.¹¹⁹ Based on these reported contacts, Perazzo provides a detailed discussion of Fontana’s possible influence on the Concrete artists, and Enrico Crispolti

argues that Fontana constituted an “antecedent” for Argentine Abstract art.¹²⁰ Kosice has claimed that the exhibition that the Madí group held at the Escuela Altamira in 1946 was organized on the basis of his contacts with Fontana.¹²¹ Yet, as with the case of Grete Stern, there is no evidence that any of these conversations or exchanges took place before *Arturo*’s publication in 1944.

In conclusion, the nature and intensity of the relationship between the *Arturo* artists and Grete Stern, Lucio Fontana, Vicente Huidobro, and Joaquín Torres-García continues to be a matter of debate. Nevertheless, scholars (myself included) cannot deny that there is a possibility that these exchanges took place and that they may have contributed to provide the *Arturo* artists with information about the European avant-garde, thus firing the debates that surfaced in *Arturo*.

CHAPTER 2

Books as sources: *Arturo* and the Argentine editorial boom of the early 1940s

When discussing *Arturo*'s possible sources, scholars have generally looked at the impact of particular persons with whom the *Arturo* artists may have interacted around the time they launched their publication—Torres-García, Stern, Huidobro, Fontana. Yet there is also the possibility that sources published in Argentina in the early 1940s—books and periodicals—may have had an impact as well. The question of what was possible to read in Buenos Aires in the late 1930s and in the early 1940s, and of how a readership for these publications came to exist, has been researched by historians Luis Alberto Romero and Leandro Gutierrez. In an important study, Romero explains that in the 1920s several publishing houses began printing large editions of celebrated works of literature and thought, and offering them to the public at very affordable prices. Editorial Claridad, for example, concentrated on leftist writers, and was central to this operation, as was Editorial Tor, that printed prestigious novels and classics in small format and on cheap paper.¹²² About a decade later, with the advent of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, the Argentine publishing industry expanded as a whole. Spain had been the major provider of books and periodicals for all of Latin America in the early 1930s, but between 1936 and 1956, books produced in Argentina completely dominated the internal market, the Spanish market, and other Latin American markets. At least fifty-six new publishing houses were founded during this period in the country: Hachette, Espasa-Calpe Argentina, Nova, Santiago Rueda, Paidós, Siglo Veinte, Schapire, Sudamericana, Losada,

Emecé, and Poseidón, among many others. In 1943, there were a total of ninety publishing houses in business in the country, and that year alone registered 631 new titles in art and art history. In 1938, the total of new book titles published on all subjects was 1,736, while in 1944 this figure had escalated to 5,323.¹²³ Adding to the movement of inexpensive publications, the new publishing houses focused on recently produced writings and foreign writings in translation. In this situation, countless bibliographical sources of all kinds would have been available to the *Arturo* artists. A sample includes two texts by Guillaume Apollinaire: *Poemas de Guillaume Apollinaire* [Poems by Guillaume Apollinaire] and “El Marinero de Amsterdam” [The sailor from Amsterdam], a short story included the detective novel series edited by Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy Casares.¹²⁴ Among Marxist sources were Karl Marx and Leon Trotsky, *El pensamiento vivo de Karl Marx* [The living thought of Karl Marx], Marx and Ernst Ludwig Plank, *A dónde va la ciencia?* [Where is science going?]; and Marx, Jean Fréville, and Friedrich Engels, *Sobre la literatura y el arte* [On literature and art].¹²⁵ There was also Elie Faure’s five-volume *Historia del Arte*, of which the fifth volume was “Modern art”).¹²⁶ Other books of interest were the two collections of *Greguerías* by Ramón Gómez de la Serna and Salvador Dalí’s *Vida Secreta de Salvador Dalí* [The secret life of Salvador Dalí].¹²⁷

In another study, Gutierrez and Romero show that, just like the output and variety of publications grew significantly between the late 1930s and the late 1950s, the audience for these publications significantly increased in numbers and expanded in types, and this was for several reasons.¹²⁸ The first one was that there were many more literate people in

the late 1930s than there had been a few decades earlier. In 1938, the percentage of illiterate residents was 7%, compared to the 18% of 1914.¹²⁹ Secondly, by the 1930s there was a significant degree of social mobility in Argentine society, particularly among the lower middle classes. Since the 1920s, the mass of immigrant workers who had arrived in the country had established itself and diversified. What in the 1910s was still an undefined conglomerate of foreign workers who lived in *conventillos* (mass housing) had by the 1930s diversified into various social levels: migrant workers, workers who still owned nothing, and people who had already begun to amass property but could not be deemed as “upper class.” On the highest level of this spectrum were the Argentine-born sons and daughters of immigrants who had attended the mandatory and state-regulated public schools but who, at the same time, could not enjoy the liberal education typical of the upper classes. These people included employed workers, white-collar employees, teachers, small business owners, professionals, and persons without a fixed occupation. For these growing lower middle classes, who aspired at social mobility, “culture” was a highly valued concept which materialized in the reading (and sometimes in the mere possessing) of books. From the 1930s and through the 1940s, the social pressures which placed a high value in being informed, up-to-date, and in general, well-educated, found a public willing and able to absorb the enormous amount of printed matter that the editorial firms produced.¹³⁰ In addition, from the early 1930s, the sheer number of places where these non-traditional readers could obtain books, read, or discuss readings increased significantly. These places were the so-called “popular libraries” which were founded by members of the new lower middle classes described above, in the very neighborhoods

that they had created. Between 1930 and 1936, the number of libraries rounded to forty-six; between 1930 and 1937, it increased to ninety; and between 1937 and 1945, the number reached slightly less than two hundred. Popular libraries existed in almost every neighborhood in the city. Besides collecting and circulating books, these libraries regularly organized conferences, dictated courses in subjects of general knowledge or skills, and organized discussions of books and artistic activities such as choirs or plays.¹³¹

In the Argentina of the 1930s and early 1940s, then, reading and debating all sorts of subjects became an everyday experience for a larger and non-traditional public of readers.

Gutierrez and Romero's studies provide a context in which to situate the social insertion of the *Arturo* artists. Pérez-Barreiro, who has researched in depth the biographies of the *Arturo* artists and sorted reliable from unreliable information, argues that most of them were part of "the working class."¹³² However, I believe that the same biographical information suggests that, even though the artists belonged neither to the traditional high classes nor to the established middle class, they still enjoyed a certain degree of independent means: a factor which suggests they were part of the new lower middle class that Romero and Gutierrez describe. In the case of Kosice and Rothfuss, their means of making a living was connected with crafts and trades, as opposed to the liberal arts preferred by the upper classes. Kosice and his two brothers were in the leather business while Rothfuss and his uncle were in the jewelry business. Yet in spite of their affiliation with trades, both were owners of small businesses and not employed workers, which clearly set them apart from the working class and allowed them more financial

freedom. Maldonado was a fine arts student and thus he himself enjoyed no financial independence. On the other hand, he came from a family of professionals (his parents were chemists), which means he had access to monetary resources and did not need to work for a living. Another clue about the relatively comfortable situation of the *Arturo* artists is that almost all of them traveled, which reveals that not only did they have enough money to leave their home city but also that they could afford a certain amount of leisure time. In 1942, Carmelo Arden Quin and Edgar Bayley traveled to Río de Janeiro and visited Montevideo on their return. Maldonado visited Torres-García in 1944. Yet since these artists' travels were only to neighboring countries and not to Europe, it is clear that none was able to make large investments of time and money for leisure. Another important factor for them not travelling to Europe may have been that Europe still at war in the early 1940s. In any event, it is clear that they were interested in travelling to Europe, since many of them did so later in the decade. Arden Quin and Maldonado both went in 1948, and Kosice went in 1957.

Other isolated pieces of biographical information reveal the relationship of the *Arturo* artists with education and culture. As explained in the introduction, all of the artists attended post secondary education but none is known to have completed his studies. Arden Quin and Kosice both attended the School of Humanities at the University of Buenos Aires but none graduated, and Kosice probably attended as a non-registered student. Maldonado attended the prestigious National Academy of Fine Arts but was apparently expelled for making a drawing inspired by Picasso.¹³³ Rothfuss attended the Montevideo Circle of Fine Arts for three years between 1938 and 1941, but it is unlikely

that he could have obtained a degree in three years. In other words, none of the artists could have or cared to attain the professional possibilities and the prestige that earning a degree in liberal or fine arts would have allowed. Nevertheless, they attended lectures, frequented libraries, and joined other artists and writers at cafes. In retrospective interviews, Arden Quin claimed to have met Torres-García at a lecture that the latter gave to the Uruguayan Theosophical Society in Montevideo. Kosice claimed that around 1940 he frequented a library on Rivadavia Avenue in Buenos Aires, where a Socialist librarian guided his readings. Maldonado states that he met Arden Quin in 1942 at the library of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires. All of the artists, in turn, apparently frequented the Cafe Rubí, in the neighborhood of Plaza Once, where they also exchanged ideas with other artists and writers. In attending lectures, visiting libraries, and frequenting cafes, the *Arturo* artists were in fact using cultural resources that were available to all—resources which their inquisitive minds clearly found stimulating. While they either could not pursue or they disregarded formal higher education, they were willing to absorb information and establish contacts through informal and unstructured channels.

If, as I have suggested, the *Arturo* artists had access to a large number of available publications, what kinds of publications could they have been drawn to read? In 1989, the artist Tomás Maldonado claimed that *Arturo*'s contributors were acquainted with European emigres fleeing from Nazism and Fascism, and especially with Spanish emigres who had arrived in Buenos Aires as exiles from Francoist Spain. He explained that:

From them [the European emigres] we had the first direct information about the avant-garde movements, about the meaning of Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, Constructivism, Abstractionism. Through them we were able to receive the innovative contribution of Modern Architecture. From the ruined cardboard suitcases of these men in flight, documents miraculously came out that fascinated us and from which we were able to obtain precious information about the radical mutations that had occurred in Europe between the wars and even earlier—brittle yellow documents, picked up in Berlin, Cologne, Paris, Madrid, Budapest, Prague, Moscow, and Milan. In general they were manifestos, pamphlets, books, journals, catalogs that frequently served as arguments or counter arguments in our febrile search for a new way to understand artistic practice.¹³⁴

While the personal encounters between the European emigres and the Argentine artists that Maldonado suggests cannot be verified, the *Arturo* artists may have known published sources by European emigres living in Buenos Aires.¹³⁵ Indeed, *Arturo* signaled its concrete interaction with Spanish emigres in the journal *Correo Literario* (1943-1945). Directed by the emigre writers Lorenzo Varela and Arturo Cuadrado, and the painter Luis Seoane, *Correo Literario* appeared in November 1943 and was published biweekly for two years. It included the contributions of the Argentine art critics Romualdo Brughetti, Jorge Romero Brest, and Cordova Iturburu, the Brazilian Newton Freitas, as well as the writers Ulyses Petit de Murat and Ernesto Sabato. It had a newspaper format and it included art reproductions, book, play, and film reviews, as well as polemical and critical essays. Deeming itself “a periodical for the majority, at the service of Hispanoamerican culture,” *Correo Literario* encouraged young persons to make contributions in art and literature to its pages.¹³⁶ On January 15th, 1944, a note appeared in *Correo Literario*’s section on cultural news announcing the upcoming publication of *Arturo*: “Arturo K 2” is the title of a journal that will soon appear in Buenos Aires. Devoted especially to Abstract Arts and Letters, it promises to be of

exceptionally interesting value. It is published by the Arturo Group.”¹³⁷ Even if minuscule, this announcement demonstrates that the writers and artists who published *Arturo* were in contact with the literary circles frequented by Spanish emigres. It is on the basis of this situation that I will venture to construct a dialogue between the essays published in *Arturo* and a few books published by Spanish emigres.

Surrealism and Invention in publications by Spanish emigres

As is already known, the *Arturo* artists had a conflictive relationship with Surrealism. In the articles they published in the journal, Kosice, Arden Quin, and Bayley opposed Surrealism to pure invention. Surrealism, they argued, stimulated the creation of images which, though not linked to exterior reality or the natural world, continued to be representational and symbolic. They argued that Surrealism—especially Salvador Dalí’s works and “oniric automatism”—implied a return to the past and to retrograde forms of art. For Bayley, Dalí’s images were “copies”—not inventions—because they returned to figurative representation and bore symbolic meanings that invoked an interior reality.¹³⁸ Similarly, Kosice accused Dalí of making “a technique” out of oniric images, and these images, of having symbolic meanings. Kosice also stated that oniric images bred on evasion and, furthermore, he questioned the mingling of Surrealist creations with the practice of psychoanalysis. For example, he criticized the “psychoanalytical spirit” of “F. Delanglade,” as this French Surrealist painter “defended the reproduction of dreams in their primitive state.”¹³⁹ Kosice argued that oniric images were “a parasite for therapy and study of Psychoanalysis” and that recording dream images neither liberated the mind nor

constituted a valid form of artistic creation.¹⁴⁰ Ultimately, he implied that there was a distance between the act of dreaming, the images that represented dreams, and the status of these representations as valid works of art.

In this respect, Kosice could have found an advocate for his disregard of dream images in the ideas of the Spanish emigre and psychoanalyst Angel Garma. Professionally trained as a psychoanalyst in Germany, Garma (1904-1993) moved to Buenos Aires in 1938, where he validated his medical degree and obtained his doctorate with a thesis entitled “Psychoanalysis of Dreams.” In 1942, together with other psychiatrists residing in Argentina, such as Enrique Pichón Rivièrè, Ernesto Carcamo, Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy, and Marie Langer, he founded APA, Asociación Psicoanalítica Argentina, and became the institution’s first president. A few of the artists who published *Arturo* in 1944, including Arden Quin and Kosice, held their first exhibition at the house of one of APA’s members, Pichon-Rivièrè. The photograph documenting the event (Fig. 45) shows that many of APA’s members were present. While Garma himself is not visible in the photograph, he was clearly involved with APA’s group and probably knew about *Arturo*’s ideas.

From the beginning, APA made great efforts to spread psychoanalysis, not only among other members of the medical profession but also before a larger public. To this event, in 1943, the institution began publishing *Revista de Psicoanálisis*, a specialized journal which was nevertheless sold in the bookstores of Buenos Aires that catered to a public interested in art and social sciences.¹⁴¹ In the first issue of *Revista de Psicoanálisis*, Garma published an article, “The psychoanalytical method of interpreting dreams:

introduction to oniric psychology,” which attacked the Surrealist artists who recorded their dreams into images expecting them to be of value for interpretation. In this study, Garma argued that the mere recording of dreams into images had little to do with the true practice of the psychoanalytical method.¹⁴² To make drawings out of dreams, he stated, was “of little value for interpretation.”¹⁴³ For the dream to be useful as a source of investigation, the psychoanalyst asked patients to relate the concrete components of their dreams to their own personal experiences. Thus, explained Garma, “we gradually obtain a series of associations that are little by little interrelated, until they allow us to perceive the desires that originated the dream.”¹⁴⁴ Yet this process, stated Garma, was not reflected in a simple drawing of the dream: interpretation could only take place in the context of psychoanalytical treatment. Garma explained how the Surrealists had misunderstood this process:

We have to insist that it is only in the above described way that oniric interpretations take place in psychoanalysis. So much so that in the year 1937, after almost half a century of investigating these questions, when Surrealist artists sent Freud a collection of drawings to know his opinion, he literally replied to them that, knowing neither the associations of the subjects nor the circumstances in which these dreams had been dreamt, the dreams had no meaning for him. All persons interested in psychology should conduct themselves like Freud if they truly intend to know well how dreams originate and what they express.¹⁴⁵

The Surrealist artists who sought to turn images of dreams into psychoanalytical material were, for Garma, grossly mistaken—just as they were, for Kosice, those artists who wanted to make these images into art. Both Kosice and Garma agreed about accusing Surrealist artists of inflating the status of dream-inspired images.

Even when Garma’s ideas could provide a sounding board for *Arturo*’s attack of Surrealism, where did the artists find specific information to construct their attack of it?

The artists' conversations with Torres-García would undoubtedly have had an impact on the artists. In Buenos Aires, however, they also could have read *Ismos*, the book by Ramón Gómez de la Serna (1888-1963). *Ismos* appeared in January 1943, published by Editorial Poseidón.¹⁴⁶ Born in Madrid, De la Serna was the former leader of literary gatherings at Café Pombo and creator of the genre *gregería*—a short sentence that chancefully juxtaposes “humorism + metaphor.” In 1936, he had moved to Buenos Aires where he wrote for the journal *Sur* edited by Victoria Ocampo and published biographies of Spanish writers and artists through Argentine publishing houses such as Emecé, Losada, Sudamericana, Poseidón, and La Nación.¹⁴⁷ He also gave conferences on Spanish art and on Surrealism in the early 1940s, notably, “Explanations on Surrealism” in the prestigious art gallery Amigos del Arte on June 4th, 1941.¹⁴⁸ First published in 1931 in Madrid by Biblioteca Nueva, *Ismos* was thoroughly illustrated with over four hundred black and white reproductions and it was an impressive compound of the author's first-hand appreciation of “Apollinerism,” “Picassism,” “Futurism,” “Surrealism,” “Simultaneism,” and many other “isms.” Interestingly, Neo-Plasticism, Concrete Art, or Russian Constructivism, were conspicuously absent from this compound.

Gómez de la Serna's characterization of Surrealism would have provided the *Arturo* artists a ready ground to take issue with. He quoted Breton's definition of a Surrealist work as a “pure psychic automatism, on the basis of which [the artist] intends to express the real function of thought. Dictation of thought without any control exercised by reason and beyond any aesthetic or moral preoccupation.”¹⁴⁹ He also recorded the Surrealists' idealization of suicide, death, and melancholy, narrating how the Surrealists

searched the daily papers to record the number of people who had committed suicide on different days. He referred to a questionnaire that they launched: “Is suicide a solution?” and quoted verses by the suicide poet Gerard de Nerval, whom the Surrealists admired.¹⁵⁰ Finally, Gómez de la Serna stated that the Surrealists desired evasion from reality and considered their poetry successful if it helped the mind evade “a stupidly bourgeois world.”¹⁵¹ He thus stated that “[a]ll [Surrealist] work consists of flights, things that are evaded, women who say half-words, total uncertainty.”¹⁵² With all of these comments, Gómez de la Serna’s *Ismos* provided the *Arturo* artists with plenty of information to construct their opposition against Surrealism. About Surrealist automatism, Arden Quin responded that “automatism has never given birth to a live creature. It has given fetuses.”¹⁵³ Automatism, he believed, was only the beginning of a valid creation but could not be considered a finished product. Among the *Arturo* artists, Kosice firmly opposed the notion that suicide and death could be admired, stating that “[i]f death existed there would not be a principle. And any inclination to grant [death] a vital meaning implies decadence and decomposition.”¹⁵⁴

Gómez de la Serna’s text also referred to the Surrealist use of dreams and of images provoked by dreams or automatism. He explained how the Surrealists recorded dreams “tachographically” through images and accounts, and how they believed that this activity helped them connect with their deeper selves.¹⁵⁵ He cited Aragon, who stated that Surrealism consisted in “the passionate and immoderate use of the image as a narcotic. . .”¹⁵⁶ The Surrealists communicated the perturbations of the mind through images, and these images were, in large part, representational. He also described Dalí’s paranoid

method, explaining how Dalí's works provoked viewers to call forth their repressed feelings and tapped emotions by juxtaposing two images in one single shape: "the horse is at the same time an image of a woman."¹⁵⁷ The double image, De la Serna explained, provoked successively obsessive and hallucinating renderings which "clarified instincts and reached solidified desires."¹⁵⁸ Dalí's double images thus served to reach the deepest human instincts and liberate repressed anxieties. For Kosice, however, Dalí's works and other Surrealist oniric images did not have a liberating effect but, instead, caused further dependence in viewers by making them focus excessively on themselves. He stated that Surrealism's focus on "sheer onirism," only led to "stupidity" because it searched for a "constant and systematic evasion."¹⁵⁹ Kosice appeared to believe that Dalí's use of symbols led to "a closed intimacy, the hermetic closing of personality."¹⁶⁰ For the *Arturo* artists, using images to dwell on one's obsessions could not be a form of liberation and thus, both symbols and figurative representation needed to be outgrown. Gómez de la Serna's *Ismos*, which was profusely illustrated with reproductions of Dalí's works, could have helped Kosice construct his opposition against the Spanish artist.¹⁶¹

As explained above, *Arturo* defended "invention" besides attacking Surrealism and onirism. Where there published sources in which the *Arturo* artists could possibly find fertile grounds for the versatile meanings of "invention"? Among the publications of the early 1940s, a useful source could have been "Apología del Cubismo y de Picasso," ["Apology of Cubism and Picasso"], published in 1943 by the Spanish émigré Guillermo de Torre in the volume entitled *La aventura y el orden* [*Adventure and Order*].¹⁶² Born in Madrid, De Torre (1900-1971) had moved to Buenos Aires in 1936 and he became a

resident in 1939. In the 1910s, he had been the leader of Ultraism—"the Spanish name for the widespread innovative current that was common to all of Europe"¹⁶³—and since the late 1920s he was a well-respected literary critic and apologist of avant-garde literature who published essays and book reviews in prestigious periodical publications on both sides of the Atlantic. In Buenos Aires, he was vital to the propagation of both international and Latin American literature and art, as a regular contributor to periodicals such as *Sur*, *El Hogar*, *Noticias Gráficas*, *Saber Vivir*, *España Republicana*, *Argentina Libre*, and *La Nación*. Among many other activities, he was the director of collections such as "Poets of Spain and [Latin] America" and "The great novels of our time" for Editorial Losada (in which he also acted as translator and preface writer), and the first compiler of the complete works of Federico García Lorca, also published by Losada.¹⁶⁴

In "Apología del Cubismo y de Picasso," De Torre described Cubism as an aesthetic that had freed painting from naturalist representation and as one characterized by cerebral conception. He also discussed a trend which he called "Abstract art" as being the direct heir of the revolution brought about by Cubism. Citing Apollinaire's *Aesthetic Meditations*, De Torre stated that "What differentiates Cubism from ancient painting is that it is not an art of imitation, but an art of conception that tends to elevate itself to creation."¹⁶⁵ He went on to say: "In fact: all of [Cubism's] theoreticians agree when they affirm that Cubist painting owes nothing to nature, and that it uses forms and colors not for their imitative value but for their pure, plastic value."¹⁶⁶ A Cubist painting, explained De Torre, constituted "a particular object, possessor of its own existence beyond the theme that inspired it."¹⁶⁷ He added that Cubist theories, while divergent, met at a

common end: “plastic construction, the desire to create, which is the obsessive common element of all the isms and which extends in a special way to poetry. Creation is its unitary purpose.”¹⁶⁸ Thus, De Torre’s interpretation of Cubism stressed the trend’s creative quality over the undeniable fact that Cubist artists did not fully discard figurative themes as they reinvented their appearance. *Arturo*’s contributors also subdued this tension between inventive intent and imitation, since figurative representation was not absent from many of the works that they reproduced in the journal (for example, the sculpture *Plástica en Madera*, by Rhod Rothfuss and two untitled works by M. H. Vieira da Silva). Nevertheless, just as for De Torre, Cubism “affirm[ed] the creative supremacy of the artist over natural models,”¹⁶⁹ *Arturo*’s essays made a leit motif of the non-referential quality of inventions and defended images “freed from the need to refer to already existing objects.”¹⁷⁰ The *Arturo* artists, then, would have found a productive reference to the term “invention” in De Torre’s interpretation of Cubism.

De Torre also perceived Cubism as a trend which maintained a check on emotion and focused on cerebral conception. He stated that “Cubist art appeals more to intelligence than to the senses. It is a cerebral art more than it is sensual.”¹⁷¹ He quoted the solemn aphorism in which Braque stated that “I love the rule that corrects emotion”¹⁷² and affirmed that Cubism corroborated “a pronouncement of Leonardo Da Vinci: “Painting is a mental thing.”¹⁷³ With these statements, De Torre pictured Cubist artists as cerebral and rigorous: as artists who had wished to control expression of feeling in their paintings, to maintain a firm rein on emotion and sensuality. De Torre’s interpretation of Cubism thus was in agreement with Arden Quin’s description of invention. The latter artist spoke of

an art dominated by “a high artistic conscience, and calculations, even cold ones, patiently elaborated and applied.”¹⁷⁴ In De Torre’s text, the *Arturo* artists would have found support for their beliefs about the need for an art in which conscious and voluntary creativity corrected unconscious and involuntary expression.

Finally, De Torre reviewed the artistic currents that had succeeded Cubism, defining them in relation to this foundational trend. These currents were, first, Surrealism; secondly, a trend that De Torre called “musical painting” or “arabesque painting;” and, finally, “Abstract art.” About Surrealist painting—presumably, Dalí’s—De Torre commented that “it furiously reacted against the Cubist compositional method, submitting to an anarchic dislocation of the elements of reality; against [Cubism’s] formal rigor and anti-anecdotalism, [Surrealism] inflated pictures with a literary intention.”¹⁷⁵ Conversely, De Torre stated, Abstract art was the continuation of Cubism:

Only in this last trend can one notice the clear resonances of Cubism. Strictly speaking, Abstract art comes to be a prolongation of Cubism. This is proved, above all, in that various painters of this movement have joined the Abstract legions. These are, for example, the cases of Gleizes, Delaunay, Herbin, Valmier, Villon, who figure in the group Abstraction, Creation, Art non representatif and in the journal of identical title and organ of the group. Besides this, there are their common aesthetic preoccupations, the cult for pure plasticity, with the exclusion of all anecdotal element, literary, naturalist; for all of them, this concept is linked with the progressive abstraction of the forms of nature; and finally, the remaining [artists] reached non-figuration through a concept of purely geometric order or through the exclusive use of abstract elements, such as circles, lines, and planes. Such a group is of course very heterogeneous. Together with the above mentioned former Cubists, artists of other origins coexist in this group: some Dutch Neoplasticists like Mondrian and Vantongerloo; some German Abstract artists from the group of Hannover: Schwitters, Vordemberge-Gildewart; ex-Dadaists like Arp; ex-Futurists like Prampolini; without forgetting a true Abstract artist like Torres-García, who creates Constructivism. But in all of them we perceive reflections of the Cubist lesson, though it is practiced now in a more restricted field. Because instead of widening the orbit of that movement and making their

art penetrate in the world of representation, they keep themselves to a restricted circle of experiments that is inevitably arid, monotonous....¹⁷⁶

De Torre's long elaboration on the "legions" of Abstract artists and their production would have served the *Arturo* artists well for several reasons. First, De Torre made a distinction between the artists who abstracted forms from nature—and thus, continued to be attached to natural representation—and the artists that invented pictorial realities with pure plastic means. For the *Arturo* artists, the only artists who were truly inventive belonged in the second group. Bayley, for example, stated that: "The moment has come whereby every representational image is forcibly a repetition and, consequently, it lacks any value. Thus, what was fruitful and was in certain circumstances a factor of aesthetic renovation yesterday, is only a form of reaction today."¹⁷⁷ *Arturo* only supported those Abstract artists who created with forms which were themselves inventions created independently of any naturalistic resemblance. De Torre's statement would also have been useful to the *Arturo* artists because it provided the names of artists, many of whom were unheard of in Argentina of the early 1940s. Yet more importantly, De Torre provided the *Arturo* artists with a provocative interpretation of Abstract art. Clearly, *Arturo* perceived in Abstract art much more than the aridity and monotony that De Torre criticized, since its contributors saw in Abstract art the seeds for social communion. Thus, Kosice stated that "Abstract art, included in a relationship with everything, will ensure the harmony of the polidimensional, without the need for psychological adaptations."¹⁷⁸ Meanwhile, Bayley equated invention with "the polidimensional conception or the sense of eternity."¹⁷⁹ The inside of the back cover of the journal spoke of "Communion. Poetry of the social contract."¹⁸⁰ While for De Torre

Abstract art signified a mere exercise in the combination of purely plastic forms, for the *Arturo* artists Abstract art came to signify the possibility of using art as a form of social transformation.

Just as the *Arturo* artists could have perceived Cubist paintings as creations—as inventions—through the eyes of Guillermo de Torre, they could have seen another defense of “invention” in Gómez De la Serna’s *Ismos*. Opening this volume, De la Serna eloquently stated that:

Now that the world is shrinking thanks to telecommunication, we have to widen it through invention. The role of invention is every day more important.

...

Invention must be unceasing. We are in debt with others when we do not accomplish inventions. To waste time is to waste invention. It is to rob those who need to move at wider and wider paces. To repeat a concept, a form of artistic composition, is to fall into the redundancy that shortens life, that suppresses the diversity of spectacles which are their own eternity.¹⁸¹

Gómez de la Serna even illustrated these ideas with a drawing entitled “the new” which consisted of the words “the new,” “long live the new,” “always the new,” “the new without reason or doubt” written throughout the rectangular page and filling all the available space (Fig. 46). The need for “the new” was also a quest of the *Arturo* artists. In lyrical tone, Bayley explained that “[n]ovelty can reside today in nothing but in the image-invention” and that “The image-invention is the interpreter of the unknown. It accustoms man to freedom.”¹⁸² He continued to say that “When we defend an image freed from the necessity of referring to existing objects and we project it onto the future, the unknown acquires a new meaning. We become familiar with that which is furthest and most different from us.”¹⁸³ The exaltation of the new and the materialization of this newness in “inventions” that did not resemble any existing reality was the central premise

of the *Arturo* artists. In Gómez de la Serna, they would have found an advocate for their daring attitude.

Beyond Gómez de la Serna, de Torre, and Garma, there were many other Spanish emigres who were active in the cultural life of Buenos Aires during this period. Some of them were associated with the “Generation of 1927,” for example, the poet and painter Rafael Alberti, the publisher Joan Merli, the painter Maruja Mallo, and the painter and lithographer Luis Seoane. These figures had been in contact with the European avant-garde, especially in Spain and France, yet their own work and ideas, retrospectively studied, does not seem linked to the ideas that surfaced in *Arturo*. Alberti’s poetry, for example, is far too lyrical when compared to that of Kosice or Bailey. As an artist, Luis Seoane was heavily influenced by Picasso’s works of the late 1920s and 30s, while Maruja Mallo’s paintings were also figurative and decorative (for example, Fig. 47). While the *Arturo* artists may have been aware of the stimuli that these Spanish emigres brought to the cultural life of Buenos Aires, it is unlikely that they would have been attracted to the notions they promoted.

Surrealism, Automatism, and Invention in works published by *Sur*’s contributors

Just as the *Arturo* artists could have been conversant with ideas appearing in publications by Spanish emigres, they also could have been receptive to literary creations that were available to them in bookstores and libraries. This is likely because in the early 1940s, the artists’ creative endeavors were primarily literary. Beyond the essays which appeared in the journal, *Arturo*’s main entries were poems by Arden Quin, Bailey,

Kosice, Torres-García, Huidobro, and Mendes. Meanwhile, visual contributions by three of the editors (Arden Quin, Bailey, and Kosice) were conspicuously absent from the journal. It is likely, then, that in the early 1940s, the *Arturo* artists would have been drawn to literary sources. In this respect, materials appearing in the important and widely-read literary journal *Sur*, and other writings published by *Sur*'s regular contributors may have been of interest to them.

Sur was founded in 1931 by the literary patron Victoria Ocampo, who also directed and funded the enterprise for the almost forty years of its existence. Modeled upon the Parisian *Nouvelle Revue Française*, *Sur*'s identity was that of a cultured and cosmopolitan journal which aimed at creating a bridge between the literary worlds of Latin America and Europe. Ocampo wished to familiarize both European writers and the Latin American public with a selection of literary, artistic, and intellectual works she admired from both continents. One of *Sur*'s strategies was to provide high-quality translations of contemporary works of literature—typically, from French, English, or German into Spanish—and to publish essays which reflected on the relationship between intellectuals and society. Poetry and short stories by local writers completed *Sur*'s make-up. The journal's relevance owed in part to its exceptional regularity and long life: *Sur* published monthly issues almost without interruption for nearly forty years, while most Latin American literary magazines died after five or six issues. The journal's privileged position was also connected to the writers it sponsored—Jorge Luis Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Eduardo Mallea, Ernesto Sabato, and others—who both gave renown to the publication and themselves earned renown by contributing to it. The same writers

published longer works under the patronage of Editorial Sur, Ocampo's second enterprise. Other journal contributors were writers such as the above discussed Guillermo de Torre and Ramón Gómez de la Serna, in addition to the Spanish poet Rafael Alberti, the Mexican Alfonso Reyes, the Dominican Pedro Henríquez-Ureña, the art critic Julio Payró, and the musician Juan Carlos Paz. As scholar John King argues in his seminal study on *Sur*, the journal was from its foundation and until the late 1950s, "one of the most important achievements in the cultural life of Latin America."¹⁸⁴ Given *Sur*'s renown as a cosmopolitan enterprise, it is also likely that the *Arturo* artists would have found the publication attractive.

A novel by one of *Sur*'s contributors which the *Arturo* artists may have found intriguing was Adolfo Bioy Casares's *La invención de Morel* [The invention of Morel]. The first chapter was published in *Sur* in September 1940¹⁸⁵ and the complete novel was published by Editorial Losada a few months later.¹⁸⁶ Like the rest of the general public, the *Arturo* artists would have noticed this novel if for no other reason than that in 1941, it earned the distinguished First Municipal Prize of Literature of the City of Buenos Aires. But even before then, in October 1940, *Sur* advertised the completed forthcoming novel with the following caption: "Reacting against the current concept of the psychological novel, when it is common opinion that new plots cannot be invented, Adolfo Bioy Casares dares to demonstrate the reverse with this novel of great interest and originality. A volume of prose writers from Spain and [Latin] America."¹⁸⁷ The advertisement in *Sur* thus suggested that Bioy Casares himself had conceived the novel as an "invention," i.e., as a literary work that constituted a "new" plot, and that he contrasted this new invention

to a kind of novel deemed “psychological.” When the finished novel appeared, Jorge Luis Borges’ prologue to it confirmed this interpretation of *La invención de Morel*. As he applauded Bioy Casares’ attitude to literary creations, he criticized

the “psychological” novel [which] also wants to be a “realist” novel: it prefers that we forget its character as a verbal artifice and makes of every vain precision (or of every languid vagueness) a new touch of veracity. There are pages, there are chapters by Marcel Proust that are unacceptable as inventions: [pages and chapters] which we accept without knowing, as we accept the insipid and repetitive things of every day. The novel of adventures, on the contrary, does not intend to be a transcription of reality: it is an artificial object that does not suffer any unjustified part.¹⁸⁸

Borges continued to define *La invención de Morel* as a work of “reasoned imagination.”¹⁸⁹ Notions such as imagination led by reason, invention of an artificial object as opposed to a transcription of reality or a psychological expression would have appealed the *Arturo* artists.

If the *Arturo* artists read *La invención de Morel*, they would have found that the plot itself dealt with the problems that arose when inventing an artificial object—a machine—to record and reproduce reality. In *La invención de Morel*, a character named Morel invents a machine that records reality’s images, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations, and actions. Whatever the machine records looks, sounds, smells, feels, and moves like real objects and live beings. Morel keeps this machine hidden in a deserted island, in the basement of a building ironically called “the museum.” As the novel begins, the main character—an unnamed fugitive who has fled to the deserted island to avoid prosecution—is riddled by the strangest perceptions about two parallel realities: his own and the reality projected by the machine. Eventually, the fugitive discovers how the machine—Morel’s “invention”—actually works and he makes some recordings. As the

machine projects his recordings, he simultaneously sees illusion and reality. At some point the fugitive cannot distinguish what is real and what is the projection of the machine, i.e., an illusion. By mistake, he records his own body one day, and he progressively loses vitality. He then realizes that when the machine records reality, this “reality” immediately begins to deteriorate and to die. The novel ends as he reflects on the immortality that he will enjoy thanks to Morel’s invention, but also about his own imminent death, since, by recording him, the machine also kills him.

Could *La invención de Morel* have provided the *Arturo* artists with stimulating thoughts? The novel suggests that recording reality through a man-made invention—in artistic lingo, naturalistic representation—has a powerfully dangerous outcome: the disappearance of reality itself. The *Arturo* artists insisted on inventing objects that were new—i.e., that did not repeat reality. They stated that these invented new realities needed to be autonomous and completely different from us: realities which did not project naturalistic images but that were only aesthetic vibration. By reading *La invención de Morel*, the *Arturo* artists could have found inspiration for their artistic theories.

Another text which the *Arturo* artists may have found intriguing was the short story “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius,” by Jorge Luis Borges. This work was published three times in the early 1940s: it first appeared in the journal *Sur* in May 1940;¹⁹⁰ in 1941 it was reprinted by Editorial Sur as part of Borges’s short story collection *El Jardín de los Senderos que se Bifurcan* [The Garden of Forking Paths].¹⁹¹ In 1944, the story was reprinted again as part of Borges’ collection *Ficciones(1935-1944)* [Fictions (1935-1944)], also published by Editorial Sur.¹⁹² The *Arturo* artists would have found this work

appealing because it dealt with the total invention of a civilization—Tlön—which was a literary fiction forged by the writers of the invented country Uqbar. In the story, the narrator (Borges himself) tells how this invention, recorded in an apocryphal encyclopedia, takes over reality, since the world finds it so appealing that humanity begins to forget its languages and its philosophical systems, to adopt those of Tlön. The story, thus, has several features which may have been interesting to the *Arturo* artists (and especially to the soon-to-be formed Madí group). First, Uqbar and Tlön are complete inventions, i.e., they are civilizations forged by “a rigor [reasoning] of chess players”¹⁹³ and made real by being recorded and given to public knowledge in an encyclopedia, i.e., the kind of book which, through its reputation as a reliable source, validates the truthfulness of the knowledge it divulges. (Since in the story Borges by chance finds an entry on Uqbar in a pirate volume of a reputed encyclopedia, and later comes across a volume of the wholly apocryphal encyclopedia of Tlön, the author plays—in a Duchampian fashion—with the idea that whatever constitutes reliable information is indeed a social construction). About Tlön, Borges explains that:

It is speculated that this *brave new world* is the work of a secret society of astronomers, biologists, engineers, metaphysicians, poets, chemists, algebraists, moralists, painters, geometers...directed by an obscure man of genius. There are lots of individuals that are masters of these diverse disciplines, but not many are capable of invention and even fewer are capable of subordinating invention to a rigorous, systematic plan. That plan is so vast that each writer's contribution is minimal.¹⁹⁴

As this quotation shows, Borges himself uses the term “invention” to describe Tlön's status: the same term which the *Arturo* artists use to describe their projected innovative creations. Borges goes on to say that: “At the beginning, it was believed that

Tlön was a mere chaos, an irresponsible license of the imagination; now it is known that it is a cosmos and that the tight laws that govern it have been formulated, if in a provisional mode.”¹⁹⁵ Borges, therefore, presents Tlön as a system in which the inventors have made deliberate decisions regarding the characteristics of their invention. The *Arturo* artists would have found this appealing, since their own notion of invention (as described especially by Arden Quin) privileged a process led by reason, planning, and deliberate decisions. Finally, the *Arturo* artists would have found this short story appealing because it sanctions the validity and ultimate transcendence of the act of inventing. In the story, Tlön—a complete invention—is so appealing to real persons that it supplants reality itself. Borges explains, for example, how Tlön’s languages, philosophical and mathematical systems, religious beliefs and objects, and other features of the invented planet are quickly supplanting ‘reality’. Tlön’s languages, for example, are being taught in schools while English, French, and Spanish are being forgotten. Tlön’s religious idols, (“made of a metal that is not from this world”) are being casually found by real people.¹⁹⁶ Thus, Borges writes that the invention of “a disperse dynasty of loners has changed the face of the world.”¹⁹⁷ The conclusion of the story, then, is that inventing is a powerful activity, and that inventions have real consequences. In this respect, Kosice’s cryptic proclamation towards the end of his essay in *Arturo* that “*EL HOMBRE NO HA DE TERMINAR EN LA TIERRA*” expresses, perhaps, his ultimate intention that inventions are not meant to be mere fictions but to take over and modify reality.¹⁹⁸ This sentence, seemingly unrelated to the rest of the essay, may be translated in several different ways: “man shall not be finished on planet Earth” or “man shall not

perish on planet Earth” or “man shall not end on planet Earth.” Either way, it suggests that a wholly new future is coming as a result of the act of inventing “abstract art.” As if making a grand prediction, Kosice wraps up his essay stating that “ABSTRACT ART connected as a relation with totality, will guarantee the HARMONY OF THE POLIDIMENSIONAL, WITHOUT THE NEED OF PSYCHICAL ADAPTATIONS.”¹⁹⁹

The writers of the circle of *Sur*, then, approached themes which could have been meaningful for the *Arturo* artists. Among *Sur*’s contributors of the 1940s there was also the then-incipient writer Ernesto Sabato. Born in 1911 in Rojas, province of Buenos Aires, around 1943 Sabato was giving up his scientific career in physics to devote himself to literature. He entered the circle of *Sur* when the Dominican writer Pedro Henriquez-Ureña read the review of *La invención de Morel* that Sabato published in the magazine *Teseo* in 1941. He also admired Borges’s and Bioy Casares’s writings, as evidenced in reviews of their experiments he published in *Sur* in 1945.²⁰⁰ The *Arturo* artists may have been attracted to Sabato’s views, since he seemingly despised Surrealism and automatism. On January 15th, 1944, Sabato published a short article in *Correo Literario* entitled “The two immortalities of Surrealism,” in which he virulently attacked Breton and automatic writing.²⁰¹ He began by quoting a passage of Georges Hugnet, who had criticized *Les champs magnetiques*, the first automatic text:

Apparently, it was all about making an abstraction of talent and its aspirations, of reason, and of all preoccupation, no matter which; to abandon oneself to a cataract of words and images; letting oneself be quickly dragged by it through thought that was free of any logical sequence. What was needed was to write at the highest speed, without corrections, without going back—in other words: to transcribe.²⁰²

The process of automatic writing, Sabato believed, could only yield poor poetic results because it was reckless and unplanned. In fact, he believed that “[a]rt. . . is exactly the opposite of automatic writing: it is conscious labor, not passive finding. Leonardo used to say that painting is a mental thing.”²⁰³ For Sabato, then, true art necessarily implied the intervention of planning and reason. As if echoing Sabato, Arden Quin forcefully claimed that an automatism must “recover” and that “a high artistic conscience, and calculations, even cold ones, patiently elaborated and applied, must intervene in it. This will automatically become a creation.”²⁰⁴ Yet perhaps the strongest of *Arturo*’s assertions regarding automatism was found on the inside of the journal cover, solemnly pronounced as a central motto of the incipient group: “Invention against automatism.” This motto will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Arturo against Fascism and Barbarism

Chapters 1 and 2 dealt with *Arturo*'s artistic sources, evaluating those usually addressed in the existing literature and expanding the range by focusing on publications that appeared in Argentina in the early 1940s. This chapter concentrates on the journal's insertion in the social and political experiences lived by the *Arturo* artists during the same period. I explore *Arturo*'s connections with local literary journals and I construct their shared dialogue with both international and national political debates—debates which centered on the possibility of the impending arrival of Fascism in Argentina and abroad. Here the intention is to shed new light over *Arturo*'s dialogues with the ideas of contemporary cultural groups and with the period's political battles, and thus to contribute to a fuller understanding of the motives and circumstances that prompted the emergence of Concrete and Madí art.

The period between 1943 and 1945 was a period of intense social and political strife in Argentina and abroad: the Allies were defeating Nazism and Fascism, a pro-Fascist military coup seized the Argentine government, and pro-democratic groups in Argentina joined their voices against Fascism. These events were closely contemporary with the publication of *Arturo* and, as this chapter will show, they were intensely debated in intellectual circles which were close to the *Arturo* artists. These events, therefore, can be constructed as an immediate experience for the *Arturo* artists, and they can be deemed as significant in order to interpret the contents of the journal. In this chapter, I discuss

Arturo's propositions as 'resignifications' of other contemporary debates and sources dating to the period between 1943 and 1945. This means that the *Arturo* artists could have translated into their own artistic terms issues which were the subject of intense discussion during this period: the defeat of Fascism abroad and the impending nationalism at home.

"Telegrams falling I oppose Nazism",²⁰⁵

While the *Arturo* artists shared no artistic credos with other Argentine painters or sculptors, they did share political beliefs with other intellectual circles. The journal they published in 1944, in fact, offers various points of departure to elucidate these artists' insertion within the most important political debate of its day: the debate concerning the Second World War. *Arturo* included two poems which made references to themes of the war and revealed the writers' attitude towards the conflict. One poem, entitled "Homage to Mozart," was written by the Brazilian modernist poet Murilo Mendes, who was already renowned by the early 1940s. The other, "*Estreno escurre*" (which may be roughly translated as "Premier drains") was written by one of *Arturo*'s editors, the then-unknown Argentine poet Edgar Bayley.

Murilo Mendes' participation in *Arturo* was apparently owed to his alleged meeting with Arden Quin in Río de Janeiro in 1942. Bayley may have met him on that occasion as well.²⁰⁶ Mendes contributed six poems to *Arturo*: "Newest Orpheus," "Homage to Mozart," "Freedom," "Pure moments," "The plastic operation," and "Everyday life."²⁰⁷ Like the poetry of the second generation of Brazilian Modernists,

Mendes's poems in *Arturo* are characterized by the use of free verse, the systematic use of semantic and syntactic discordance, and the creation of freely associated images. Mendes's personal style contained a feeling of mystery and transcendence which is generally attributed to his conversion to Catholicism in 1934.²⁰⁸ In 1942, Mendes's work would have accessed Argentine literary circles through a special issue on Brazilian literature published in the widely read journal *Sur*. This issue included a poem ("Lament of the contemporary poet"), a biographical note, and a portrait, as well as a critical article on the Brazilian Modernists written by Vinicius de Moraes, one of the members of this group.²⁰⁹

In "Homage to Mozart," Mendes eulogized the Austrian musician as a symbol of culture that prevailed above the destructive armies taking over Europe. A fragment reads:

The night wraps the mountains of Salzburg
The swords of dictators conspire in the darkness
They take the flutes the cymbals the violins
And they mud the horizon with the tanks the canons the parachutes
...
Fascinated by your crystal
That remains proud and simple above the carnage
I come to confess my faithfulness to you [Wolfgang Amadeus]
While the rays of the dictators make war over Europe.²¹⁰

In this poem, Mendes alluded to the destructive forces of the war as he spoke of "the dictators" fighting over a Europe he idealized. The dictators' deadly weapons (swords, tanks, cannons, parachutes, bayonets, and "giants of lead") "confabulat[ed] in the dark," "mud[ded] the horizon," "destroy[ed] the music box," "construct[ed] false nations," "crash[ed] the wing of music," and "suffocat[ed] the dance of the first morning of creation." The poem, in fact, was an ode to Western, even Classical culture.

While Mendes's poem was a saddened reflection on the catastrophic effects of war, Bayley's "Premier drains" made clearer allusions to his opposition to Nazism. Bayley published three poems in *Arturo* ("Premier drains," "First poem in Cion," and "Second poem in Cion") which initiated the line of writing he eventually developed and called "*invencionismo*."²¹¹ In *Arturo*, Bayley juxtaposed discordant sounds and images, avoided rhyme and rhythm, and included invented words. A translated fragment of "Premier drains" read as follows:

....
Summer solstice on this bread run away
And inside through how many channels it climbed
How good good good good good
There was in the bladder material for conversation
But the bread dropped crumbs and cuic
Today I do the premier today Edgar
Loturcamonudolantianamente
Bastion taken by my troops I salute
Freedom sending the breads ahead
Telegrams falling I oppose Nazism
Guitar in robe steals my bottles of milk
I celebrate the decision not to use parachutes
A hysterical sap subverts the lottery
Eternity has leaned towards the profile of the gun.²¹²

Each of the lines in this poem is a syntactically coherent unit but none of these units appears to have much semantic coherence. Nevertheless, Bayley included a few lines which, when isolated from the rest of the poem and interpreted as a combination of meaningful entities, reveal his attitude towards Nazism. The lines "Bastion taken by my troops I salute," "Freedom sending the breads ahead" and "Telegrams falling I oppose Nazism" sound like mock military orders or reports: they comically render authoritarian control while revealing Bayley's side in the war. Other lines ("I celebrate the decision not

to use parachutes” and “Eternity has leaned towards the profile of the gun”) seem to refer to violence and destruction caused by parachutes and guns. In the first one, Bayley directly expresses his rejection of a typical form of attack used during the Second World War. In the second phrase, he combines an abstract concept (eternity) and an image (the profile of a gun) to reflect on the possibility of a never ending conflict. Through these lines, then, Bayley criticizes Nazism and the war itself.

Mendes’s and Bayley’s allusions to the ravages of war seem undoubtedly minimal when considered within the entire array of material published in *Arturo*. On the other hand, it is significant that the editors of *Arturo* decided to include these references to the war in their publication, precisely because they regarded “invention” as an endeavor that did away with sentimentalism and expression as well as with references to reality. Sentimentalism and expression prevail in Mendes’ poem, while a rather literal reference to Bayley’s side in the war occurs in his poem as he writes “I oppose Nazism.” From the point of view of the artistic (or poetic) credo of the *Arturo* artists, the presence of these references in the journal seems like an aberration. However, these same references emerge as coherent, even purposeful, when one explores the politicized environment which the *Arturo* artists experienced in Argentina in the mid-1940s.

Arturo was published in March 1944, in the midst of various social and political events that marked this epoch in Argentina as especially conflictive. On June 4th, 1943—i.e., less than a year before the publication of the journal—a military coup took power in the national government. In the months that followed, a significant portion of the population came to perceive the new government as a local brand of Fascism—or

“Nazifascism,” as it was sometimes called. This was so for several reasons. While the government initially declared itself as provisional, it was soon clear that it did not expect to return democracy to the country. It also violated constitutional rights in many ways. On October 28, 1943, the universities were closed; on November 6th, the highly politicized Argentine University Federation (FUA) was prohibited; on December 31st, all political parties were dissolved and compulsory Catholic religion was established in schools. Many groups also distrusted the military government because it was publicly approved by a handful of persons now known as the right-wing nationalists. For the last twenty years, these persons had been progressively appropriating and amalgamating anti-democratic concepts from different ideologies—Fascism, Corporativism, Hispanism, and Falangism. They rejected Parlamentarism or any other party system, and proclaimed the need to destroy democracy through a military coup. In their view, power did not belong to “the people” but to an intelligent minority conscious of the evils of democracy. Through their publications—*La Voz Nacional*, *La Nueva República*, *Liga Patriótica*, and many others—they demanded the abolishment of the Saenz Peña Law of universal suffrage and called for a corporate, Catholic, and hierarchical government. Thus, even though the military coup was strictly organized by members of the military, the right wing nationalists welcomed it warmly. Another reason why many political groups (the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Democratic Unions, and various scions of the former Radical party) opposed the new military government was the latter’s policy of neutrality in the Second World War. All previous administrations had also kept Argentina out of the world conflicts because the country could not afford to ruin its prospective

commercial possibilities with England. The new military government, however, irritated a large portion of the Argentine population because its neutralist policy owed not only to an economic imperative but also to the Fascist overtones of its rhetoric and policies. Argentina's change of fronts, in fact, was only realized effectively when the government subscribed to the final Act of Chapultepec on February 1945 and declared war on Germany and Japan on March 27th, just one month before the unconditional surrender of Germany.²¹³

While the government's policy was to remain neutral from the world conflict, many members of Argentine society perceived the European events as a national and even as a personal matter. An example of this attitude was the celebration that took place in Buenos Aires upon the liberation of Paris in August 1944, in which crowds of Argentine citizens went out to the streets to cheer the imminent Allied victory and repudiate the Nazi invasion of 1941. The daily *La Nación* opened its edition of August 24th, 1944, by stating that "Buenos Aires celebrated with joy the recovery of the French capital."²¹⁴ News about crowds which had spontaneously congregated in Plaza Francia and other sites of the city filled subsequent pages of this issue.²¹⁵ The first page of the issue of August 25th showed a photograph of a multitude taking over every corner of Plaza Francia and flooding adjacent streets (Fig. 48). The article that accompanied the photo described the episodes in emotional tone:

...Buenos Aires, which received with immense happiness the news about the liberation of Paris, was now getting ready to renew its increased enthusiasm, its love for a country that has always occupied an avant-garde site in the struggle for civilization....Together with the Argentine flag waved the French flag in many balconies, and in every street one could see the joyous faces of numerous strolling persons who, bearing the Argentine and the French colors on their chest,

announced the cause of their satisfaction: the renaissance of France. There was so much happiness because Paris has managed to come out of the shadows that imprisoned her during four years that the people needed a river into which to flow. This [river] was Plaza Francia, where once and again were heard the strophes of [our] National Hymn and of The Marseillaise...²¹⁶

Like the multitudes which congregated in Plaza Francia to cheer the liberation of Paris, the publications of many intellectual circles made definitive declarations regarding their side in the Second World War. Both of the journals which supported the *Arturo* artists at this early date—*Contrapunto* and *Correo Literario*—declared their anti-Nazism, their support of the Allied cause, and their belief in democracy. In November 15th, 1943, the opening issue of *Correo Literario*—the journal which a few months later warmly announced the upcoming publication of Arturo²¹⁷—declared the “democratic conviction” of its editors and contributors, as it stated:

While *Correo Literario* is not a political journal, in its issues there will always be present the democratic conviction of those who support it and contribute to it, the active faith in freedom’s triumphant future.

Correo Literario will be a periodical open to all intellectual tendencies—needless to say, if they are worthy—and will ask them to not limit their plan of action to only one circle, even though this position may be very correct.²¹⁸

With this statement, *Correo Literario*, declared its support of democracy: a declaration which, in the Argentine political context of the early 1940s, meant the repudiation of both Hitler’s authoritarian power and of the local military government. The journal also pleaded that its contributors kept involved with the journal’s political cause, as it “ask[ed] them to not limit their plan of action to only one circle.” Thus, while the journal perceived culture and politics as two distinct spheres, it still demanded that its contributors be politically active and that they supported their democratic cause.

Like *Correo Literario*, *Contrapunto* was another short-lived periodical specifically devoted to “Literature-Criticism-Art” but attentive to the events of its day. Published from December 1944 until October 1945, it had a large format, was printed on newsprint, and was profusely illustrated with art reproductions by Argentine artists. In April 1945, about a year after the publication of *Arturo*, *Contrapunto*, published an interview with Tomás Maldonado as part of a series of interviews with renowned Argentine artists of different tendencies: Antonio Berni, Juan del Prete, Horacio Buttler, Norah Borges, Emilio Pettoruti, and Joaquín Torres-García, among others. In 1945, it also published an article on Guillaume Apollinaire by Guillermo de Torre, the translated text of Apollinaire’s *The Cubist Painters*, and a reproduction of a painting by Kandinsky. As it included all these contributions, the journal clearly acted as a forum of reception for the ideas that had surfaced in *Arturo* a year earlier and for the *Arturo* artists themselves.²¹⁹ The journal’s political stance was yet another element that further strengthened the contributors’ common identity. *Contrapunto*’s first issue contained the following declaration:

2. *Contrapunto* is not a political journal but, before the conflict that in the universal order divides men in two precise bands—those nazifascists that give up human kindness, confessing that they support the desire to structure the world on grounds of hostility; and those who, from the right to the left support human kindness and fight against Hitler’s myth—,its editors and contributors identify themselves with the forces of democracy, assuming that their condition as writers is not restricted but enriched with a manifest position in this respect.

...

4. To all those who agree with *Contrapunto*’s position, we invite to contribute to its pages.²²⁰

Contrapunto, then, made an explicit statement about its opposition to Nazism, and made of this stance a condition for those who wanted to become its contributors—among

whom was Maldonado. *Contrapunto* also openly declared its opposition to the local military government in its sixth and last issue, published in October 1945:

Contrapunto adheres to the will of the Argentine people, who express their deep desire to own their constitutional rights and enjoy the full exercise of authentic democracy. Like men of letters, the members of this periodical understand that their responsibility is maximal at this hour. Without demagogy, without political commitments, without extemporaneous boasting, they express their desire as Argentine citizens who do not conceive of any other mode of coexistence than that which is inspired by freedom, legality, and justice.

Because they despise a near past of administrative corruption and political perversion, because they do not admit dictatorship, because they believe in democracy and in the future, they join their voices to the voices of the men of the people.²²¹

For *Contrapunto*—as well as for *Correo Literario*—“democratic conviction” and “authentic democracy” meant their opposition to both Nazism and to the local dictatorship. It is noteworthy that even though neither publication directly dealt with specific political events, they both declared their side in the war and in the local strife. This attitude was undoubtedly inscribed in the tensely politicized context which these intellectuals experienced: a context in which not declaring their position (i.e., remaining neutral) could be interpreted as a sign of support of the opposing front. *Arturo*’s side in the war was not evident through its essays but, as noted above, one of the journal’s editors (Bayley) and one of its contributors (Mendes) included declarations against Nazism in their poems. By way of these declarations *Arturo* inscribed itself in the anti-Fascist front that other intellectual circles were part of.

“Invention against automatism”

Arturo’s motto “invention against automatism” provides a second avenue through which to access the publication’s insertion within the social and political discourses of its context. The *Arturo* artists constructed their motto as a polarity, i.e. as an opposition in principle. A polarity may be imaged as an empty frame, case, or box with two compartments whose contents repel each other.²²² *Arturo* presented the two terms of its motto as an opposition. Bayley opposed “image-invention” against “representational images,” and Kosice advocated “pure image” against “pure onirism.” In different ways, both writers proposed a polarity which contained two terms. On one side was “invention,” and on the other were a series of terms which the writers regarded as interrelated: “automatism,” “onirism,” and “representation.”²²³ What Kosice and Bayley presented as an opposition, Arden Quin described as a dialectical development. He argued that artistic production, like history itself, had evolved dialectically. He pictured the history of art as a “spiral ascension,” in which “primitivism” had shifted to “realism” before ascending to the next level, which corresponded to modern art. During the period of primitivism, stated Arden Quin, art had sought to express the fears and feelings of primitive humans, while during the period of realism, art had sought to represent nature, reaching “an almost photomechanical realism” in the Renaissance. During the period of modern art, he argued, art needed to focus on “invention” and not on representation or expression, since both of them belonged to the past. He thus stated that those artists who advocated automatism and onirism had no place in modern art since returning to expression (“even if it is subconscious [expression]”) or representation (“even if it is of

dreams) implied a historical regression.²²⁴ All three writers, then, conceived of invention as the opposite of automatism—and thus, they conceived the relationship between the two terms as a polarity.

In a polarized relationship, the opposing terms usually acquire opposing positive and negative connotations. This is also present in *Arturo*'s motto. One of the terms in the polarity (automatism) invariably acquired the negative connotation of a regression. Arden Quin characterized "oniric automatism" and "expressionism" as "a reaction," "a return," and stated that "they must be exiled, abolished."²²⁵ Bayley claimed that representational images "referred to collective fears."²²⁶ Kosice stated that "onirism" implied "subordination," "stupidity," "evasion," "closed intimacy," "hermetic closing of personality," "death," "decadence," "decomposition," "cowardy," "insufficiency," and that it "harms the need...for a savage liberation."²²⁷ Meanwhile, they all attributed positive connotations to the other term, defining it as an evolution. Kosice characterized "pure image" as "affirmation," "tension," "aesthetic vibration," "vision of continuity," "immersion," "movement," "invention," "exploration," "autonomy," and "polidimensional harmony."²²⁸ Arden Quin stated that "invention" was "a scientific, modern primitivism," that conscience "ordered" and "purified it," and that in it intervened "calculations, even cold ones, patiently elaborated and applied."²²⁹ Bayley claimed that the image invention was "the interpreter of the unknown," that it "accustome[d] man to freedom," that humanity "projected it onto the future," that it made "the unknown acquire a new sense," and that through it "we become familiar with that which is furthest and most different from us."²³⁰ With the motto "invention against

automatism,” then, the *Arturo* artists constructed a polarity in which each term absorbed negative and positive connotations.

Yet how does the polarity contained in *Arturo*’s motto offer a connection into the experiences that Argentine intellectuals lived during the Second World War? *Arturo*’s motto may be a resignification of other polarized constructions that filled the Argentine political discourses of this period. Just like the *Arturo* artists conceived of “invention” as a positive term and “automatism” as a negative term, the intellectual circles who supported *Arturo*—i.e., those who published in *Contrapunto* and *Correo Literario*—constructed a polarity as they characterized “Nazism” as opposed to the Allied cause and to “democracy.” In this polarity, the term “Nazism” carried a negative connotation and the term “democracy” was the positive term. Furthermore, the negative characteristics which the writers of *Contrapunto* and *Correo Literario* attributed to Nazism were the same as those which *Arturo* attributed to automatism: Nazism was described as a regression into a historical past of primitivism and into irrational impulses. In turn, the positive characteristics which these writers attributed to “democracy” were the same as those that the *Arturo* artists attributed to “invention:” “democracy” implied evolution into the future and into an age of reason and intelligence. Between two independent sets of polarized terms, there may have existed a relationship which may be called a ‘resignification.’ This relationship was possible because the two polarities were conceived in the same context by independent but historically-connected groups. In a situation such as this one, the resignification of one polarity into another one may be

imaged as a snowball that keeps growing as it rolls: to a first set of polarized meanings adheres a second set; to this adheres a third set, and so forth.

Two statements in *Contrapunto* characterized Fascism as spiritually retrograde and welcomed a future of intelligence, science, and reason. In June 1945, *Contrapunto*'s editorial statement entitled "End to the time of contempt" claimed that:

The world dawns to order, it inaugurates its unity again. The serene order of peace, the desired return from chaos.

Against the dusk of the despots that unleashed barbarism, proclaiming spiritual decadence in the name of death and of force, the sun rises over a bleeding and exhausted world. Yes, bleeding and exhausted but firmer than ever in its faith in the rights of intelligence, of equality and in the fraternal unity of peoples. The concepts that these last three expressions carry were drowned, buried under the debris of the destroyed cities and under the clamor of a humanity denigrated in the deepest of its condition.

...

Man has experienced—there, in Europe, in the midst of the unleashed chaos; here, in America with our tearing anxiety of saddened brothers—once more, in the course of their history that the unbreakable principles of reason and of justice are the deep means of every society of civilized men; the hypertrophied bodies of the hunting capitalist systems, of the imperialist ambition heated in fire and iron, are unnatural phenomena.

...

...The British, Soviet, and North American armies have destroyed the infernal machine of Hitler and the victorious blood of the soldiers of victory has fallen over the guilty head of the criminals. To them, then, goes the homage of free men.²³¹

Here, within a conception of history that implied an evolution from the past to the future, *Contrapunto*'s editors characterized "the infernal machine of Hitler" as "unleashed chaos," "dusk," "barbarism," "death," "force" "humanity denigrated in the deepest of its condition," and "unnatural phenomena." The Allied victory, instead, implied "dawn," "unity," "serene order of peace," "intelligence," "equality," "the fraternal unity of peoples," "reason," "justice," and "civilized men." A similar opposition

of concepts also appeared in the fifth issue of *Contrapunto*, dated August 1945. Printed on the front page of this issue was the transcription of the speech that Charlie Chaplin pronounced at the end of the film “The great dictator.” It pleaded: “Let us all fight, then, to free the world, to tear down the nationalist banners, to finish with egoism, hate, and intolerance. Let us fight for a world in which reason dominates, in which science and progress take us all to happiness.”²³² Again, this text attributed the notions of “egoism, hate, and intolerance” to Nazism, opposing them to the “reason,” “science and progress” associated with the new world. Therefore, *Contrapunto* constructed the polarized terms “democracy” and “Nazism” characterizing them with the same attributes with which *Arturo* qualified the terms in its motto “invention against automatism.” Pronounced in this fashion, the two polarities resignified and reinforced each other.

A similar situation occurs with the statements published in *Correo Literario*. On August 1st, 1944, *Correo Literario* published an “Open letter” which stated:

. . .in Teheran [in the last speech of Winston Churchill at the House of Commons], the destiny of the world was sealed towards a new era of construction and reconstruction, an era which will extend through a long period of freedom without threats, without dangers of wars or perturbations. This world depends on a period of harmonious peace. . .so that civilization will be saved and progress will continue its march. ...once the Axis is defeated...[the world] is willing to battle for well being and culture. . . . There approaches, once the deadly enemy of the destinies of humanity is defeated, an era of concord, of creative evolution, of dignified and effective peace, of growth of all the values that give life greatness. . . .the proximity of the Allied victory is testimony that the worst of the enemies to these ambitions, Fascism, will very soon disappear from the face of the earth.²³³

In this “Open letter,” as in the texts published in *Contrapunto*, the upcoming period of peace and democracy was characterized as “a new era of construction and reconstruction” i.e., as a positive future. Nazism implied all the opposite characteristics:

regression, barbarism, and war. *Correo Literario*, then, constructed the same polarity as *Contrapunto*, and their common discourse found a resignification and a source for reinforcement in *Arturo*'s motto "invention against automatism."

The association of Nazism and Fascism with regression, as well as the association of democracy with progress was inscribed in literary journals beyond *Correo Literario* and *Contrapunto*. While there is no documented evidence that these journals or the literary circles that produced them had a historical relationship with *Arturo*, referring to them is useful to widen the ideological context within which *Arturo* operated together with other cultural publications. Among these publications was *Insvla*, that printed articles similar to the pro-Allied statements of *Contrapunto* and *Correo Literario*. Founded in the winter of 1943 by the writer Renata Dongui Halperin, *Insvla* launched eleven issues until 1946. Like many literary journals of this period, *Insvla* published poetry, literary works, philosophical and historical essays, literary and art criticism, as well as rhetorical and even propagandistic articles. Throughout its pages, editors and contributors displayed a sense of cultural elitism. This was implied by the purposefully elegant and ascetic format of the publication, by its very name which suggests an island, and by advertisements which characterized *Insvla* as a publication for enlightened minds. Just like in *Contrapunto* and *Correo Literario*, *Insvla* described the victory over Nazism as an evolution into the civilized era of democracy:

What wave of credulity allowed the arrival of Fascism? What underground forces emerged to make possible the dream of a soap opera fantasy? How could somebody confuse progress with what in reality was a regression into tens of centuries?²³⁴

...

Let us not analyze the close circumstances, they are not enough to explain this befuddling of intelligence and sensitivity. Fascism was more than a reaction to fear: it was the first bell ringing of triumphant lack of culture; . . .²³⁵

Just like *Insvla* deemed Nazism as a regression into barbarism, it celebrated the liberation of Paris by saying that:

Our love for France, we share with all the civilized peoples of the earth . . .
Its resurrection rejoices and encourages us: we certainly know that with her will be reborn the ingenious and artful Italy, that the flower of Spain will recover its homeland; the oppressed peoples will breathe freedom. . .²³⁶

Another journal which vilified Nazism as retrograde against an enlightened democracy was *Sur*. As noted above, the poet Murilo Mendes, had also been included in the special issue on Brazilian literature that *Sur* published on September 1942. Through this special issue entitled “Homage to Brazil,” *Sur* wished to celebrate Getulio Vargas’ decision that Brazil joined the Allied cause.²³⁷ In a vein similar to *Insvla*, *Contrapunto*, and *Correo Literario*, the writers of *Sur*, characterized Nazism and democracy as an opposition between the savage and the cultured, in which the choice of Argentine intellectuals was beyond doubt. Thus, Borges wrote:

For European and Americans there is one order—one single possible order: that which in the past took the name of Rome, and which is now Western culture. To be Nazi (to play the game of energetic barbarism, of a Viking, a Tatar, a conquistador of the sixteenth century, a gaucho, a Red Skin) is, in the end, a mental and moral impossibility.²³⁸

For Borges, then, Nazism paralleled cultures which belonged to the past and which he regarded as being on the cultural and geographical margins of the Western tradition. These peoples, he also considered irrational and violent. Borges’s conception of Nazism, then, resonated with *Arturo*’s conception of automatism and onirism, since the journal described automatism and onirism as creative pursuits representative of irrational

feelings and fears characteristic of primitive cultures. By way of these resonances, *Arturo* inscribed itself within the front against Nazism that a large portion of the Argentine population formed at the end of the war.

“Civilization and barbarism”

Arturo critiqued automatism and onirism because they dwelled on fear and irrational thought. It praised invention because the latter evoked the unknown, liberation, reason, and novelty. The polarity that these terms constructed echoed the characterizations that several literary circles made of Nazism and democracy—a characterization which the staunch neutral policy that the Argentine military government took in the Second World War intensified. *Arturo*’s characterization of “automatism” and “invention,” furthermore, also echoed yet another polarized construction which took a polemical tone in Argentina in the early 1940s. This was “civilization and barbarism.”

“Civilization and barbarism” was the motto that the Argentine liberal thinker Domingo Faustino Sarmiento had invented to characterize his vision of the country. He fully developed this concept in his 1845 text *Facundo Civilization and Babarism*, published during his forced Chilean exile from the rule of Juan Manuel de Rosas, who ruled the country between 1829 and 1852. In 1940, Sarmiento was arrested and exiled after publishing virulent attacks against Rosas in the periodical *El Zonda* (1939-1940), and *Facundo* was part of his journalistic campaign to discredit Rosas from his exile.²³⁹ Eventually, Sarmiento’s vision of civilization contributed to the liberal organization of the country, which was stipulated in the national constitution of 1853. It also permeated

the vision of the country and of its history that the state-regulated and mandatory schools imparted and that the widely-read liberal press conveyed through newspapers such as *La Nación* and *La Prensa*. Sarmiento's vision, in sum, became Argentina's dominant discourse regarding the country's history and its ambition to become a European-like nation.²⁴⁰

Sarmiento made in *Facundo* the following observation: Argentina, with its rural areas and its urban centers, was a polarized society that lived simultaneously in two different epochs. He thus commented that:

In the Argentine republic, one sees at one time two different civilizations in the same territory: one that is just being born and that, without knowing what lies on its head, is mending the naive and popular efforts of the Middle Ages; and another, which without caring for what lies at its feet, tries to achieve the latest results of European civilization. The nineteenth and the twelfth century coexist; one inside the cities, another in the countryside.²⁴¹

In the countryside, explained Sarmiento, prevailed "barbarism," whose representatives were the gauchos and the caudillos. A native of the unpopulated countryside, the gaucho was a semi-socialized being, who had adapted with his natural instinct and his physical adeptness to the isolated, hard life of the pampas and the mountains. Sarmiento vividly described the gauchos through the biography of the "barbarian" caudillo Facundo Quiroga, native of the northwestern province of La Rioja. He pictured the gaucho as a cruel and unstable individual who acted violently and who, instead of thinking, allowed instinct to lead his acts. The gaucho blindly followed his caudillos and became their victim, since these were bestial chiefs governing the clan for their personal benefit. The living expression of the caudillo, explained Sarmiento, was Juan Manuel de Rosas, Argentina's dictator at the time when he wrote *Facundo*. Rosas

had asked the popular vote to grant him “the sum of public powers” and thus, the people had voluntarily made him into a tyrant who held all the powers of the state in his hands. Representative democracy, explained Sarmiento, had disappeared since the population had abandoned its rights in the hands of a demagogue. Rosas, furthermore, had institutionalized political persecution, exile, and execution of his enemies with the help of La Mazorca, a body of secret police. By making a parallel between the caudillo Facundo Quiroga and the dictator Rosas, Sarmiento turned his critique of barbarism into a critique of Rosas’s government, whom he portrayed as an unscrupulous caudillo insatiable for blood. In *Facundo*, Sarmiento called for the overturn of Rosas and for the organization of Argentine society modeled upon the French and, especially, the North American liberal ideal. Thus, he explained that future Argentine governments needed to encourage the settlement of European immigrants who would assimilate the gauchos by forming socially civilized, urban centers throughout the country. Sarmiento, in sum, distrusted the native elements which populated Argentina and idealized the power of the mind and the intellect to rationally control the political future of the country.

While Sarmiento’s ideas prevailed as Argentina’s dominant discourse through the later part of the 19th century and the early 20th century, in the 1930s and into the 1940s, his vision of a civilized Argentina as a liberal state populated by the descendants of Europeans began to be severely attacked by a historiographical trend known as “Revisionism”—a trend whose authors were, not surprisingly, the right-wing nationalists who were supporting the military government that had taken power in 1943. Historical revisionism had two central tenets: that the figure of Juan Manuel de Rosas, who had

been execrated by liberal writers like Sarmiento, needed to be rehabilitated; and that Argentina's liberal policies had willingly allowed Great Britain's economic penetration in the country, turning Argentina into an appendix of the British Empire. Writing a new history, the right-wing nationalists adopted Rosas as the symbol of the system to which they aspired, since he had been a dictator, an ally of the Church, and had remained close to the Hispanic tradition—as opposed to the French tradition which the liberal writers admired. Carlos Ibarguren's first biography of Rosas, *Juan Manuel de Rosas: su vida, su tiempo, su drama* [Juan Manuel de Rosas: his life, his time, his drama] explored the period's apparent lack of social conflict and its freedom from “un-Argentine” ideologies. The caudillo himself was for Ibarguren “a man of order,” enemy of parliaments, intellectuals, the press, cities, anarchy, and revolutions. At the same time, he viewed Rosas as a friend of hierarchy, property, and religion. These first books were followed by many others: *Ensayo sobre Rosas en el centenario* [Essay on Rosas on his one-hundred year anniversary] and *Vida Política de Rosas* [Political life of Rosas] by Julio Irazusta; *Vida de don Juan Manuel de Rosas* [Life of don Juan Manuel de Rosas] by Manuel Gálvez; *Defensa y pérdida de nuestra independencia económica* [Defense and defeat of our financial independence] by José María Rosa; and *San Martín y Rosas* [San Martín and Rosas] by Ricardo Font Scurra.²⁴² The nationalists' fanaticism for Rosas climaxed in 1938, when they founded the Center for Historical Investigations Juan Manuel de Rosas, the publishing house La Mazorca and the bi-monthly review *Juan Manuel de Rosas*. Through these new interpretations and publications, Sarmiento's motto “civilization against barbarism”—meaning that Argentina would find civilization in becoming a

European-like nation that combated the barbarism incarnated by local caudillos—was hotly debated and severely attacked in the early 1940s.²⁴³

Thinkers affiliated with Sarmiento's thought, in turn, replied to the attacks towards Sarmiento made by historical revisionists. Between 1938 and 1944, Sarmiento found plenty of defenders who reprinted his works and authored new interpretations of his life and deeds. On July 28th, 1938, the Museo Histórico Sarmiento was founded, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Sarmiento's death, and this institution sponsored conferences, courses, and publications about the historical figure. Between 1938 and 1944, *Facundo* was reprinted sixteen times by independent publishing houses, and various combinations and compilations of his writings appeared in ninety-two different editions. There were also one hundred and thirty five new books about Sarmiento, many of which displayed their laudatory attitude towards the subject in the title.²⁴⁴ Some of these works were *Sarmiento: el gran civilizador* [Sarmiento: the great civilizer] by Alberto Larrán de Vere; *The Pan-American Ideals of Sarmiento*, by Alberto Palcos; *Sarmiento: sociólogo de la realidad americana y argentina* [Sarmiento: sociologist of American and Argentine reality], by Ricardo Levene; *Sarmiento: Semblanza e Iconografía* [Sarmiento: representation and iconography], by Juan Rómulo Fernández; *Sarmiento: Fundador de la Escuela Popular* [Sarmiento: founder of the people's school], by Américo Ghioldi; *Luchas y Rutas de Sarmiento* [Sarmiento's fights and roads], by Antonio Bucich; and *Sarmiento: constructor de la nueva Argentina* [Sarmiento: constructor of the new Argentina], by Aníbal Ponce.²⁴⁵ The diverse background of these writers attests to the popularity of Sarmiento among a large spectrum of cultural and

political circles. Levene was a renowned jurist and historian, Ghioldi and Ponce were Marxist and socialist writers, Bucich directed the cultural center of the immigrant neighborhood of La Boca, and Palco was the director of the library of the Universidad Nacional de La Plata.

The *Arturo* artists, in fact, interacted with literary circles that supported Sarmiento's defense of European culture against local, popular elements. The literary critic Juan Jacobo Bajarlía—who in 1946 would publish the first in-depth interpretation of *Arturo* and of the idea of “invention” in his book *Literatura de Vanguardia*—published in 1941 a book called *Pro-hombres de la Argentinidad* [Men who Encourage Argentinism].²⁴⁶ The latter book included a laudatory chapter on Sarmiento entitled “Sarmiento: the civilizer genius” and spoke of Sarmiento as a “genius in the most lucid concept of intelligence.”²⁴⁷ Furthermore, both *Correo Literario* and *Contrapunto* expressed their admiration for Sarmiento in reviews of books that had appeared in those days. In *Correo Literario*, the writer Gregorio Weinberg reviewed a collection of letters by Sarmiento, entitled *Páginas Confidenciales* [Confidential Pages], which had been published by Editorial Elevación in 1944. Weinberg praised Sarmiento as “an apostle of culture” and added that he read this book “with that proud admiration that we reserve for [Sarmiento's] figure, which the impudence of those who vindicate Rosas' bloody figure seeks in vain to taint.”²⁴⁸ In *Contrapunto*, the writer Luis Gudiño Kramer made a similar evaluation of Sarmiento, as he scathingly reviewed *Vida de Sarmiento: el hombre de autoridad* [Life of Sarmiento: the man of authority], a biography written by the nationalist writer Manuel Gálvez. Gudiño Kramer complained that:

The absolute misunderstanding of Sarmiento's spirit and of the problems of his epoch; the obsessive and constant admiration towards Rosas...make [Gálvez's] book into a failed attempt to turn our entirely free, generous, funny, overwhelming, and genial journalist, brave statist, untiring fighter, leader of progress and of the European civilization into a vulgar man of authority. . .

...

[Sarmiento] constitutes one of the surest examples of fidelity to progress, contempt for aggressive nationalisms, love of civilization, love of culture, contempt for personal wealth, hatred of *caudillismo* and barbarism.²⁴⁹

Weinberg and Gudiño Kramer, furthermore, clearly understood that the revival of Rosas was closely connected with the rise of right-wing nationalism in Argentina. Thus, Gudiño Kramer commented on Gálvez's "visible inclination towards anti-democratic systems" and characterized him as a "man of the right, militant Catholic, admirer of Rosas, and organically incapacitated to hear the rumors of the people and appreciate their just claims and ideals...."²⁵⁰ Finally, in his review Gudiño Kramer connected national events with international events, as he interpreted Gálvez's Argentine nationalism as a sign of the latter's support of Fascism. These relationships clearly surfaced as Gudiño Kramer made the following comment:

Of course, the book was finished at a bad moment, without any opportunity to succeed. When Gálvez began to write it, the figure of Sarmiento was going through a bad moment in our country. [Public figures associated with right-wing nationalism such as] the Font Escurras, the Pepe Rosas' or the Gentas and the Alvarez Prados pulled Sarmiento out of schools or proscribed his portraits, his busts and his images. It was October 1942. But as [Gálvez] concluded [his book] on September 1944, Fascism was already crumbling in the world and, in our country, his servers lost positions. A son of [Gálvez], doctor Gálvez Bunge, interventionist minister in the province of Santa Fe, was forced to leave his post without achieving his totalitarian ambitions, and therefore even more hopes of the creole "nazionalists" fell. [sic.] [Gálvez's] book was there, finished, shining in mistakes and twisted inclinations, and somebody published it with some pomp.²⁵¹

In other words, for Gudiño Kramer, a frequent contributor to *Contrapunto*, Gálvez's repudiation of Sarmiento was the other side of his revival of Rosas; the revival

of Rosas owed to the rise of Argentine nationalism; and the rise of Argentine nationalism was the local counterpart of international Fascism. These were, in fact, the beliefs that prevailed in *Contrapunto* and *Correo Literario*, the literary forums in which the *Arturo* artists moved.

Arturo, then, found allies among intellectual circles who supported Sarmiento's notion of civilization. Is it possible that, in this context, the journal's motto "invention against automatism" could be a resignification of the polarity "civilization against barbarism" that these circles professed so deeply? Indeed, the characterizations that *Arturo* makes of automatism and of invention closely echo Sarmiento's accounts of barbarism and of civilization. For Sarmiento, barbarism was incarnated by the gaucho, whom he portrayed as a regressive being. In *Facundo*, the gaucho lives in a quasi mythical, unchanging space called the *pampas* or *llanos*. There, he suffers the constant challenges of nature and of other gauchos who, like him, violently fight and sometimes kill to survive. Sarmiento sees the gaucho as a wild animal: worthy of admiration for his capacity to survive in the midst of adversity; beautiful and inspiring in his use of physical dexterity and force; but trapped in his poverty and rough life because he does not know any better. The gaucho is a human being subjugated by instinctual forces: when it comes to survival, instinct is his greatest ally, but it is also the enemy that never sets him free of his barbaric condition. While in *Facundo* Sarmiento described the gaucho as an irrational being, the *Arturo* artists associated automatism (the words or forms that result from the rendering of uncontrolled thought) and onirism (the rendering of images that have been dreamed) with the creative pursuits of so-called "primitive" cultures and of the irrational

mind. In primitive cultures, wrote Arden Quin, man was “dispossessed of reason and space by exterior forces.” In this environment, beings and elements pressure him and he “can do nothing but *represent his fears*, indecisions, searches, transforming them in superstitions, magic, signs. . .”²⁵² The only reason for automatism and onirism, explained Kosice, was “a constant and systematic evasion” and they led to “a hermetic closing of personality,”²⁵³ while Bayley claimed that oniric, representational images were “references to collective fears.”²⁵⁴ Automatism and onirism, then, resulted from irrational and unconscious thought: as such, they served their purpose in the world of primitive man but, when pursued by modern artists, these artists regressed to primitive expression. For both Sarmiento and the *Arturo* artists, the perpetuation of either the *gaucho*, or of automatism and onirism constituted a regression and a mistake in a world that needed to encourage progress to overcome fear.

Arturo’s concept of invention also had close parallels with Sarmiento’s concept of civilization, as they both pleaded for something which would be completely different, which would completely modify the reality which they wished to overcome. In *Facundo*, Sarmiento explained that civilization would reach Argentina only when Rosas had been overthrown and, especially, when a new government welcomed, fostered, and directed the flow of European immigration. European immigration, he believed, would bring not only population to the deserted pampas, but also a new type of citizen—the industrious European—who would raise new cities while assimilating and overcoming the unhealthy gaucho. In Sarmiento’s utopia of progress, the instrument of civilization was something new and different—a new reality completely different from that reality which already

existed. This new reality was embodied by a foreign (European) population, whom he conceived as rational, hard working, and morally superior to the local population of irrational gauchos and unscrupulous caudillos. Just as Sarmiento imagined European immigration as the embodiment of difference and the instrument of a civilized reality, the *Arturo* artists conceived of “invention” as the creative process which would allow the construction of a new, wholly invented reality. Invention was, according to Arden Quin, a rational process, since it entailed “calculations, even cold ones, patiently elaborately and applied” and “conscience, ordering and purifying it.”²⁵⁵ Thanks to an image-invention, claimed Bayley, “we become familiar with that which is furthest and most different from us.”²⁵⁶ For both Sarmiento and the *Arturo* artists, either European immigration or invention constituted the instrument of progress—either social or artistic progress—and these instruments were the only adequate ones to overcome their present reality. *Arturo*’s “invention against automatism,” thus, could have been a resignification of the old but still feverishly debated construct which Sarmiento had invented in the 19th century.

The defense of liberal ideology and of Sarmiento was also the quest of intellectual circles not directly connected with the *Arturo* artists. Exploring the arguments is nevertheless useful to fully understand the ideological context in which *Arturo* operated. An example is the journal *Pórtico*, the magazine of arts and letters published by the Ateneo Popular de La Boca. Affiliated with the Italian-immigrant neighborhood of La Boca, its Ateneo Popular also sponsored many cultural events—conferences, art exhibitions, music recitals, and others. Fifteen issues of *Pórtico* appeared between 1940

and 1945, many of which expressed the journal's support of Sarmiento in many ways. An example is the following editorial note:

The Ateneo Popular de la Boca, on occasion of the episode of vandalism suffered by the statue that perpetuates the memory of the illustrious civilizer Domingo F. Sarmiento in Parque 3 de Febrero, repudiates this act of unculture which aggravated Argentine society. It also wishes to join the celebration of the hundred years of the first publication of *Facundo*—a work which has survived one hundred years in the American mind. . . .²⁵⁷

Likewise, *Insvla* celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the daily newspaper *La Prensa*. Without naming Sarmiento, *Insvla* characterized the contribution of the prestigious liberal daily as the transformation from barbarism to civilization that Sarmiento had advocated:

La Prensa appeared when our country was a primitive shepherds' countryside with village-like cities, [a countryside] frequently whipped by the torrid winds of excessive political passion and fratricidal struggles. . . .In this evolution [*La Prensa*] was a worthy factor, assimilating to our country the plentiful arrival of foreigners, contributing to the unmistakable Argentine style of incorporating them without depressing xenophobia, and letting the spontaneous forces of human kindness prevail in the mutual coexistence [of peoples].²⁵⁸

The director of *Insvla*, then, celebrated the population of the primitive countryside with European immigrants, and congratulated the liberal newspaper *La Prensa* for contributing to the realization of this dream of progress which Sarmiento had envisioned.

In 1938, the journal *Sur* also celebrated Sarmiento's ideals, since Victoria Ocampo invoked his name to defend her internationalist (and especially pro-European) approach to culture. In an editorial statement entitled "Defense of Intelligence: With Sarmiento," Ocampo quoted words that Sarmiento had published during his Chilean exile in June 1942: "A writer is not man of one nation; the philosopher belongs to all countries; before his eyes there are no limits, there are no dividing terms; for him, humanity is and

must be a great family.”²⁵⁹ Ocampo was well aware that *Sur* was attacked as pro-foreign culture by nationalist writers in Argentina.²⁶⁰ Invoking the name of Sarmiento added yet another layer to Ocampo’s internationalist cultural stance, since Sarmiento himself had despised fanatic nationalisms and had dreamt of an Argentina that assimilated members of all European nations. For *Insvula*, *Pórtico*, and *Sur*, then, the name of Sarmiento evoked internationalism, progress, and the overcoming of barbarism.

Arturo’s allegiances in context

It is evident that *Arturo* maintained historically verifiable links with the journals *Correo Literario* and *Contrapunto*. These journals, in turn, explicitly declared their opposition to Nazism and to local brands of Fascism. They also supported democracy and the name of Sarmiento in the midst of a political climate that challenged both of them. *Arturo* inscribed itself within these debates in two ways. First, two poems published in the journal made clear anti-Nazi references. Secondly, *Arturo*’s motto “invention against automatism” constituted a polarity which resignified other polarized political discourses prevailing in Argentine society in the 1940s. *Arturo*’s ideological sphere, in turn, may be widened by exploring declarations which appeared in the journals *Insvla*, *Pórtico*, and *Sur*—declarations which just like those in *Correo Literario* and *Contrapunto* also vilified Nazism and the name of Rosas as much as they praised democracy, the liberal tradition, and the name of Sarmiento. The implication is, of course, that *Arturo* manifested an unspoken yet graspable political allegiance with all of these groups.

At any rate, it should be noted that the *Arturo* artists also identified themselves with Communist ideology, as evidenced by some of their statements in the journal. Arden Quin, for example, declared in his essay that “it is the material conditions of society that condition the ideological superstructures” and that modern art corresponded to “the process of social and economic liquidation of the capitalist order, and to the creation of a new society under socialist forms of production.”²⁶¹ Arden Quin’s terminology probably owed to his reading of Marxist sources, since he mentions that it was “Lenin” who “underlined Engel’s proposition of the ‘spiraling march’” of history.²⁶² Kosice’s essay also made a reference to dialectical materialism, as he stated that “the conditions which determine an evolution in each epoch are material conditions.”²⁶³ While, from reading the journal, it is not possible to know whether the *Arturo* artists also supported Stalin in 1944—the journal does not mention ‘Stalin’ or ‘Stalinism’—by 1946, the members of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención declared their support of Stalinism in an open manner. Indeed, Communist ideology would become a prominent aspect in the artistic practice of many members of the Asociación who had also contributed to *Arturo*: Maldonado, Bayley, and possibly Prati.²⁶⁴ In view of Communist leanings of the *Arturo* artists, it seems contradictory that they would think of themselves as part of the pro-democratic front. And yet, a close look at the viewpoints of the Communist Party in Argentina in 1944 and 1945 will clarify this apparent contradiction.

The Communist Party in Argentina faithfully followed Stalin’s mandates and his foreign policy. Thus, when Nazi troops invaded Soviet soil on June 22nd, 1941 and the USSR sided with the Allies, the Argentine Communist Party became the champion of

Argentina's entry in the war in support of the Allied cause. In doing so, the party opposed both the government of President Ramón Castillo (1941-1943) and the military dictatorship of 1943, since both administrations supported neutrality. In this context, Argentine Communist (Stalinist) leaders like Roberto Ghioldi and Vittorio Codovilla would soon accept to talk in public acts together with persons from very diverse backgrounds, such as Nicolás Repetto, Socialist leader and former national deputy, and Victoria Ocampo, member of the social and cultural elite, staunch supporter of the Argentine liberal tradition, and director of *Sur*. In these acts, except for their declared adhesion to the USSR, the discourse of the Argentine Communists did not differ significantly from that of the rest of the democratic front.²⁶⁵

The Argentine Communist Party's support of the local democratic front was made official in 1945. At this time, a variety of political entities and associations which grouped persons of diverse economic, social, and ideological backgrounds formed the League of Democratic Coordination. The League's members included the Unión Cívica Radical, the Unión Demócrata Nacional, the Unión Demócrata Progresista, the Unión Cívica Radical-Antipersonalista, the Unión Obrera Local, the Socialist Party, the Argentine Communist Party, the Federación Universitaria Argentina, producers' and business associations, and various cultural, professional, and union associations. The League was formed so that all its members would unitedly repudiate the local military government based on the fact that the latter had violated human liberties and that it supported authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies.²⁶⁶ The League's declarations, in fact, resonated with statements published in the journal *Orientación*, the "official organ

of the Communist Party.” The issue printed on August 15th, 1945 featured the following statement:

This unites the Argentine People:

All the country’s public opinion feels united regarding the following claims, around which is organized the democratic fight and [around which] progresses our national unity.

1. Immediate call to general elections under the auspices of the Saenz Peña Law.

...

3. Elimination of all official candidates.

...

5. Freedom for all the democratic prisoners, return of the exiles, and ample amnesty to all already processed military and civilian persons.

6. Freedom to act for all political parties and worker’s unions, and for unions of thinkers and supporters of democratic activity.²⁶⁷

In the same issue of *Orientación*, page 2 featured heroic portraits of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, Harry Truman, Clement Attlee, and Chiang-Kai-shek.²⁶⁸ Printed almost a month later, issue no. 303 included the following “Homage to Sarmiento:”

The large act of homage to the great Sanjuanino [native of the province of San Juan] which took place yesterday afternoon counted with unanimous popular and democratic warmth. The memorial to Sarmiento was supported by hundreds of entities and by all the democratic parties, which gave the act not only a cohesive character but also repudiated the forces of Nazi obscurantism that from the inside and the outside of palatial [governmental] circles, stained the memory of the author of *Facundo*.

COMMUNISTS ARE IN SUPPORT

The Communist Party sent its expression of support to the commission that organized the act, expressing in this note the great significance that the memory of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento has for [our] democracy.²⁶⁹

Filled with statements and illustrations such as these, *Orientación*, the official organ of the Communist party, manifested its support of a diverse coalition of anti-nazi and democratic persons and institutions. It also seems evident from the statements in *Orientación* that the Argentine Communist Party was willing to support the defense of

Sarmiento, even though Sarmiento's notion of democracy—a notion which included the so-called civilized Argentines and excluded the so-called barbarians—may be regarded as tremendously elitist. The polarizing social and political debates of this period, however, permitted and even encouraged these otherwise awkward allegiances to take place.

In view of this, it is not surprising that the *Arturo* artists, who declared their Communist leanings more or less openly in their own publication, could form an allegiance with other intellectual circles which, in spite of not sharing *Arturo's* Communist ideology, opposed Nazism, supported democracy, and supported the defense of Sarmiento. Nor is it surprising that their central artistic declaration—"invention against automatism"—would resignify the polarized and politicized debates that these intellectual circles constructed at the end of World War II. Just like the marginal *Arturo* artists found their niche inside the Argentine democratic front, the publication of *Arturo*—in all ways an aberrant event in the Argentine artistic world—was part and parcel of the central political and social questions of this period.

PART II

CONCRETE AND MADÍ ART

CHAPTER 4

Concrete and Madí art:

signifying dissidence during the first Peronist government

The artists who published *Arturo* in the summer of 1944 disbanded soon after the journal's appearance. During the course of 1945, two new groups formed: the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención and the Madí group. The artists of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención included Maldonado, Bayley, and Prati—all of whom had participated in *Arturo*—and several new members: Antonio Caraduje, Simón Contreras, Manuel Espinosa, Claudio Girola, Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Rafael Lozza, Raúl Lozza, Rembrandt Van Dyck Lozza, Juan Melé, Alberto Molenberg, Primaldo Mónaco, Oscar Núñez, Jorge Souza, and Gregorio Vardanega. The most frequent participants in Madí events were Gyula Kosice, Rhod Rothfuss, Esteban Eitler, Diyi Laañ, and Martín Blazsko—even though dozens of other artists, writers, musicians, dancers also participated at different times. Madí also included several invented members, since some of the artists signed works and texts with pseudonyms—of which the best known is Raymundo Rasas Pèt, one of Kosice's pseudonyms.²⁷⁰ By 1946, both groups had publicly announced their agendas through manifestos. The Concrete artists read the Manifiesto Invencionista [Inventionist Manifesto] in March 1946 at their first exhibition in the Salón Peuser. The Manifiesto Madí [Madí Manifesto] was read at the first exhibition of the Madí group in the Instituto Francés de Estudios Superiores in August 1946. By this year, both the Madí

and the Concrete artists were actively creating works of art, and they would continue to do so through the next decade.²⁷¹

The Madí and the Concrete artists worked, exhibited, and published manifestos and journals during the idiosyncratic rule of Juan Domingo Perón. Colonel Perón was one of the members of the military government that had taken power on June 4th, 1943. In November 1943, he became the Secretary of Labor and Welfare of this government, and from this post, he established negotiations which favored the labor unions to a degree that previous governments had never approached. These policies of “social justice” made Perón popular among unionized working class sectors, while the middle class and the business community opposed him fiercely and deemed him a Fascist. In the first weeks of October 1945, opposition to Perón was so adamant that he was arrested, but on October 17th, a massive workers’ demonstration obtained his freedom. In February 1946, Perón won the presidential elections by a slim margin and assumed legitimate power in June of that year. During his rule, his policies of social justice continued to favor unionized workers and sought to develop the national production of consumer goods and services. Perón’s rule was also severely authoritarian, as he elicited social consensus through a mixture of mass appeals, mass propaganda, and outright repressive measures.²⁷²

Scholars have often wondered whether the volatile political climate of the country during this period—especially during the first years of Peronism—affected the Concrete and the Madí artists in any way. Pérez-Barreiro, for example, interprets Madí and Concrete art as the artistic parallel of the political phenomenon of Peronism. He hypothesizes that, just as Peronism offered a political alternative to the seemingly

irreconcilable ideologies of Communism and Capitalism—the so-called “third position”—, these young artists combined the practice of modern art with Communist ideology. In doing so, the artists would have outgrown the seemingly opposed tensions that had riddled older generations of artists: the Florida and Boedo groups.²⁷³ Pérez-Barreiro, then, treats these two realities—Concrete and Madí art, and Peronism—as two coexistent entities, but does not articulate a dialogue between them. Other scholars have scrutinized the reception of the Madí and Concrete artists by the Peronist government. As explained in the introduction, Nelly Perazzo describes the savage verbal attacks that Perón’s Minister of Education, Oscar Ivanissevich, made towards “abstract art” as a whole.²⁷⁴ Looking into the same question, however, Andrea Giunta has noticed that while Peronist cultural policies neither welcomed nor favored abstract expressions, the Concrete and Madí artists were not political victims of the Peronist regime: they coexisted “on [its] margins.”²⁷⁵

At any rate, while scholars have concentrated on the government’s reception of abstract art, virtually no attention has been paid to the artists’ own interpretation of the Peronist phenomenon in the second part of the 1940s.²⁷⁶ This owes, primarily, to a dearth of primary documentation, since there exists, to my knowledge, no more than two recorded comments in which the artists vaguely alluded to Perón’s cultural policies. In 1946, the Concrete artists published an article in their own organ, the *Revista de Arte Concreto*, in which they attacked “the anguished, chubby men of the Secretariat of Culture, climbers of Christian guilt, who hate our art for being joyful, clear, and constructive.”²⁷⁷ In 1952, the organ of the Madí group, *Arte Madí Universal*, criticized cultural authorities, commenting that: “[t]he last submission to the Venice Biennial has

signified for Argentina a blunt negation of the new [artistic] values. We invite competent authorities to stop and compare the true current of contemporary plastic arts with the submissions that today put us [our country] half a century behind.”²⁷⁸ Both comments, in other words, vaguely attacked unnamed cultural officers of the Peronist government for their aesthetic choices. If the historian only takes these written declarations into account, the artists emerge as largely indifferent to the singular events brought about by Peronism.

However, this chapter will show that it was nearly impossible for the Argentine population in the second part of the 1940s to remain aloof—i.e., to not have an opinion—about the Peronist phenomenon. Perón’s unprecedented use of the mass media (radio, printed media, street images, and later, television) guaranteed that every member of Argentine society would experience the sentimental language of his rhetoric, the overwhelming support that unprivileged groups gave him, his doctrine of social justice and his protection of national industries, the initial success of his economic policies, and his coercive measures. The Peronist phenomenon radically changed the manner in which Argentine society ‘consumed’ politics, and, like other members of society, the socially-concerned Concrete and Madí artists could not have ignored these changes. Thus, the Concrete and the Madí artists would have lived Peronism as an immediate experience. Furthermore, other scholars have also traced the responses of intellectuals towards the Peronist phenomenon—intellectuals who, to a large extent, chose not to verbalize direct responses to the regime. Literary critic Andrés Avellaneda, for example, has studied the veiled “modes of reply” which the writers Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy Casares made to Peronism. In a short story that only circulated among friends until after the fall

of Perón in 1955, “La fiesta del Monstruo” [“The feast of the monster”], the writers, using the pseudonym of H. Bustos Domecq, “hypersaturated” a text with codes of vulgar dress, food, speech, and brutal activities which they associated with the supporters of Perón.²⁷⁹ Avellaneda has also called attention to the significant popularity of the genre of detective novels in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s, which Borges and Bioy Casares partly fostered when acting as directors of the collection *El Séptimo Círculo*, published by Editorial Emecé, between 1945 and 1955. The plots in these novels rescued, above all, pure intelligence, the powerful use of thought and the unstoppable, invincible logic of the characters (detectives) who guarded a form of order against the threat of the chaotic (crime, enigma). In the particular context of Peronism, argues Avellaneda, this form of fiction contributed to create a sense of cultural and political identity among the educated, who perceived themselves as defenders of reason against the cultural vulgarity, irrationality, and brute force of the Peronist masses.²⁸⁰ John King has also called attention to the veiled and elliptical attacks which Victoria Ocampo made on Peronism in *Sur* in 1948, when she criticized the tacky forms of park architecture and the vulgar sounds that came out of radios during the Peronist period.²⁸¹ Andrea Guinta has discussed Jorge Romero Brest’s review of the 1948 National Salon as a statement in which the critic called for “the freedom of color and form” to signify his perception that Peronist cultural policies were bastardizing art.²⁸² Federico Neiburg and Oscar Terán have studied particular institutions, the Colegio Libre de Estudios Superiores and the journal *Imago Mundi*, as sites in which intellectuals—notably the liberal historian José Luis Romero—negotiated spaces of resistance and dissidence.²⁸³

In view of the overwhelming Peronist phenomenon and the concurrent response of other intellectuals to this phenomenon, I bypass the dearth of documentation and deduce the artists' interpretation of Peronism from their attitudes towards images and from their involvement with other cultural groups. This chapter constructs a possible dialogue between art objects created by the Concrete and the Madí artists between 1945 and 1948, and a few massively displayed images spread by the Peronist government in the same period. It also explores a number of institutions with which the artists got involved, and which were also affected by Peronist policies: the Argentine Communist Party, the Altamira School, and the Teatro del Pueblo. The Madí and the Concrete artists, then, emerge as responsive to the social tensions of this period.

Concrete and Madí art: avoiding representation

Between 1945 and 1948, the Concrete and the Madí artists illustrated the concept of invention—introduced in *Arturo* in 1944—via several artistic strategies which focused on avoiding representation. According to the Concrete artists, representational forms needed to be combated because the latter reflected and perpetuated class-based social organizations. Representational images, they believed, forced individuals to relate to concepts, connotations, and feelings which were superfluous to the object itself, and which enticed individuals into supporting class-based social organizations. Concrete art, instead, would invent works of art whose reality ended in the objects themselves (since they sought to represent nothing beyond themselves). The artists therefore regarded Concrete art as a worthy contribution to social liberation, since Concrete art helped

viewers grasp true reality (the object itself) while struggling against the concepts, connotations, and feelings evoked by representational art.²⁸⁴ Similarly, the Madí artists believed that their art

confirm[ed] man's definitive, concentrated desire to invent and construct objects inside the absolute values of the eternal; next to a humanity that struggles for the construction of a new classless society, which liberates energy and dominates space and time in every direction and matter until its last consequences.²⁸⁵

Both the Concrete and the Madí artists, then, believed that constructing objects which avoided representation, meaning, and interpretation would help viewers connect with reality: the reality of objects, materials, and language. Being in contact with these real objects, in turn, would confront viewers with the myths that bourgeois society perpetuated in the process of representation—myths which prevented social revolution.

Following these beliefs, the Concrete and Madí artists developed various strategies to shatter the possibility of representation. One such strategy emerged in the “cut-out frames,” i.e., works which avoided representation by breaking the shape that allowed the perception of spatial depth: the rectangular frame. Already in *Arturo*, Rhod Rothfuss had suggested that the rectangular frame signals the presence of the portion of reality that is missing from the painted image and thus, encourages the perception of the painted image as a representation. Quoting Gauguin, Rothfuss called this “the abominable error of naturalism that began with the Greeks of Pericles.”²⁸⁶ Materializing this critique, a work by Tomás Maldonado from ca. 1946 (Fig. 49) presented two geometric shapes within a cut-out frame. In this work, not only did the shapes inside the frame not evoke natural figures: the frame of the painting discouraged the viewer from perceiving these shapes as inscribed within a receding space. Yet while the Concrete

artists initially found the cut-out frame successful, they soon became dissatisfied with it, concluding that “AS LONG AS THERE IS A FIGURE OVER A BACKGROUND, ILLUSORILY EXHIBITED, THERE WILL BE REPRESENTATION.”²⁸⁷ The cut-out frame, they realized, did little to solve this problem, since the contiguous geometric shapes were unavoidably read as ‘figures’ in the cut-out frame as much as in the rectangular frame—a fact that becomes evident when comparing the same work by Maldonado with a work by Alfredo Hlito that is placed in a rectangular frame (Fig. 50). In view of the failure of the cut-out frame, the Concrete artists developed the “coplanal,” which “separated in space the constituting elements of the painting without abandoning their arrangement on the same plane.” An example by Alberto Molenberg from ca. 1946 (Fig. 51) consisted of three invented shapes which were independently cut out of a wooden panel, painted, and connected by rods on the reverse side. Thus, these shapes continued to be “a painting”—since all shapes were arranged on the same plane—but they did not rest on a painted background, and therefore, avoided generating the illusion of a receding space.

Representation could also be avoided by emphasizing the flatness of the pictorial plane. In a cut-out frame by Manuel Espinosa from ca. 1946 (Fig. 52), the artist inscribed several thick black lines which crossed through the pictorial plane, creating several geometric subdivisions on it. The black lines flattened the pictorial plane and emphasized the character of the painting as a design in which the artist chose forms and colors independently of a natural model. A painting by the Madí artist Rothfuss’s from ca. 1948 (Fig. 53), for example, used a cut-out frame instead of a rectangular one and he separated

the 'contained' shapes with black lines, emphasizing their flatness and discontinuity on the plane and their distance from the natural world.

Like the Concrete artists, Madí artists explored the concept of the coplanal. However, they made a significant variation. The coplanals by the Concrete artists were meant to avoid the illusion of depth by suppressing the painting's background. The coplanals by the Madí artists avoided representation by introducing the possibility of change and transformation within the work. In an articulated work, wrote Kosice, "the assumption of a change, the innumerable possibilities of its aesthetic variation, of its mutation, of its expected angles," made the work not only "an observed entity" but also "a playful instrument."²⁸⁸ I would also argue that in introducing the possibility of change, articulated works disrupted the assumption that an object bears an unequivocal image, since the spectator could not consistently perceive the same figure as the work changed. An articulated painting by Raymundo Rasas Pét (Kosice's pseudonym) from ca. 1948 (Fig. 54), for example, consisted of regular geometric shapes (circles, rectangles, a square) which were arranged on the same plane and attached with rods and hinges that allowed them to be moved and to change positions. The shapes that made up the painting, then, could be variously arranged, and each arrangement provoked a new, different figure. The object itself, thus, was not static and a plurality of interpretations was possible.

Rasas Pét's articulated painting used forms which were distinct: circles, rectangles, and a square. These, in turn, were painted in various bright colors. Therefore, while the painting could be repeatedly manipulated and variously arranged, any one of

the potential arrangements would still suggest a representation. In *Escultura Articulada Lúdica* [Playful Articulated Sculpture] from ca. 1948 (Fig. 55), Kosice made a key modification which took the suppression of representation a step further: he created an articulated work with identical parts. These identical parts—rectangular ‘blades’ of unpainted metal—could be manipulated into different arrangements, but since all the metal blades were identical, all arrangements would look very similar among themselves. Thus, the sculpture was not only capable of suggesting an endless number of arrangements: each of these arrangements would now be confused with the others. The object rejected representation because, as the artist physically manipulated it, each of the shapes which occurred in the process of manipulation could not be successfully contrasted with previous or later ones. Not only was the possibility of an exclusive relationship between object and representation shattered: the relationship among all the possible representations became ambiguous.

The Madí artists, then, sought to avoid the fixity of representations onto objects, and they did so by prompting the possibility of transformation and ambiguity into their works of art. Madí poetry, in turn, eluded representation by preventing readers from interpreting meaning. It is in the process of interpreting meaning that an object becomes a figurative or abstract representation since an object, in its materiality, is only an object. If an object cannot yield interpretations, no meaning can possibly emerge from it and no representation is possible. Madí prose and poetry prevented the interpretation of meanings by disrupting the construction of semantically coherent structures. An example

was the Madí Dictionary (Fig. 56), which consisted of a “dictionary” of invented words with unreadable meanings. In Spanish, a given section of it read as follows:

M

Maclode: Upward hill. / Slope to insinuate land.

Meril: Kidnapping of flat centimeters. / *Madicional* [‘Madí-like’ or ‘of Madí origin’] opposition and resistance.

Miogue: Account of events in which the authors of great answers participated.

Molois: Site where the most varied adjectives are collected. / *Fam.* Insult.

Musver: About the manner to focus in photography the liveliest glare of a childhood memory. / Fixation.

Macichud: Line of shade that emits a loosening of gray beams.

N

Nandy: Arrangement for new personal cuño.

Nem-Er: Record of instances.

Nigs: Opening that is left so that a cluster of enchanted powder emigrates.

Novoh: Shooter that the riverside authority exercises to learn the coastal ruling.²⁸⁹

In the Madí Dictionary, the writer sabotaged semantic coherence by combining impossible relationships between concrete objects within sentence structures that were syntactically correct. Because the grammar was indeed correct, the text encouraged the reader to read the entries, but the reader could not interpret meaning in the process of reading. For example, in the last line of the “M,” which reads “line of shade that emits a loosening of gray beams” the sentence structure was grammatically correct. Yet, for the reader, it was impossible to picture an image out of this sentence: a shadow cannot be a line, a shadow cannot emit light, and a shadow cannot emit a loosening of gray beams because a shadow is a gray beam. The Madí dictionary, in sum, disrupted comprehension: the reader was consistently prevented from interpreting a sequential meaningful sentence. Since semantic coherence was disrupted during the process of reading each entry,

representation between each term and each definition did not occur. The very concept of this “Madí dictionary,” in fact, disrupted the meaning of the word “dictionary:” a dictionary is a book that defines the meanings of words, but in the Madí dictionary, the words to be defined do not exist as linguistic conventions and their definitions cannot be interpreted. These same characteristics were present in Madí prose, poetry, scripts for plays, and short stories, since Madí’s main objective was to invent literary works which bore no resemblance with known objects, characters, events, or places. All Madí texts included invented words and unimaginable images (in the case of poetry) or situations (in the case of play scripts and short stories). Some examples are the short story by Diyi Laań, “La batalla de Inod,” and the play script named “Tiagno,” both published in 1947 in *Arte Madí Universal*.²⁹⁰

A parallel strategy to avoid representation in painting consisted of sabotaging the legibility of the painted design. In a cut-out frame now attributed to Diyi Laań from ca. 1948 (Fig. 2), for example, the painted design that fills the surface of the frame is, from a formal point of view, utterly discontinuous. The minimal repetition of shapes disrupts linear continuity, and this disrupts the legibility of fuller figures. The coexistence of highly saturated colors and uncolored shades of gray further contributes to the disruption of consistent colored patterns or color transitions. The effect is that the colored shapes clash into one another, disrupting and confusing the legibility of the design. As is the case with many other Madí works, this work may in fact be regarded as ‘badly’ painted. I would argue, however, that in Madí paintings the visual legibility of the design is consistently disrupted for the sake of avoiding representation.

A last radical strategy to avoid representation consisted in physically denoting the absence of representation. To suggest the representational vacuum, in Fig. 52, Rothfuss cut out an irregular shape inside the pictorial plane. For practical purposes, this cut-out shape was read as a hole in the middle of the painting. Thus, this work not only signified Rothfuss's desire to suppress illusionism: the hole in the middle of the painting physically denoted that the painting sought to represent nothing, since the contents of the painting were nonexistent. An even more drastic exploration of the same idea occurred in the painting by Laań discussed above (Fig. 2). In this work, the irregular frame itself was hollow and this hollowness denoted that representation within this frame was impossible.

The Concrete and Madí artists believed that, by way of these strategies, forms and linguistic units could maintain their condition as material, real things. The artists wanted their works to avoid connotations and meanings so that they would not become representations. Because representations, in the artists' view, enticed individuals to support class-based social organizations: they would foster mental corruption and social enslaving. As we shall see, such a negative opinion about representational images sharply contrasted with the central role which Perón attributed to representational images for propaganda purposes.

Peronist propaganda and representation

While the Concrete and Madí artists explored ways to avoid representational images, the political regime under which they were producing their works made extensive use of both linguistic and visual images for propaganda purposes.²⁹¹

Throughout his speeches, Perón used such verbal images as he referred to and interpellated the workers who benefitted from his social policies. For example, instead of using a concept such as “the working class,” which would have alluded to the occupations and the social strata of a group of persons, he used as an image—“the shirtless workers” [*los descamisados*]-which tangibly evoked a male body partially deprived of clothing, as well as heat, sweat, and, in paternalist rather than critical tone, vulgarity. In the speech given on October 17th, 1946, at Plaza de Mayo, Perón addressed the workers as “mis queridos descamiados” [my loving shirtless workers].²⁹² He also announced that starting in 1946, October 17th would be the “Day of the Shirtless Workers,” and claimed that “this is the government of the Shirtless Workers.”²⁹³ Finally, he stated “I don’t want to govern over men but over their hearts, because mine beats in unison with the heart of each shirtless worker, which I interpret and love above all things.”²⁹⁴

Another image was “the mass” [*la masa*], a term which described the countless number of people that congregated in public spaces to cheer Perón. The term, again, evoked a concrete image instead of a concept, especially when Perón referred to it as “the suffering and sweaty mass”.²⁹⁵ In the same speech (October 17th, 1946), he referred to “this grandiose mass”²⁹⁶ and described himself as “mixed with this sweaty mass.”²⁹⁷ Another image—one that evoked controlled motion—was the motto “from home to workplace and from workplace to home” [*de casa al trabajo y del trabajo a casa*], which Perón used to demand that his supporters remain calm when dispersing a demonstration. In a speech which he delivered on October 10th, 1945, from the balconies of the Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión, Perón exhorted the workers to “remember and

maintain this motto in your memory: from home to workplace and from workplace to home, and with that we will be victorious.”²⁹⁸ All of these mottos were, in fact, representational images. Taken together, these images formed a pantheon which elicited rather than conceptualized the ever returning subject of Peronist rhetoric: social justice.

During the first few years of Peronist rule, the government’s dispensation of “social justice” was imaged in several propaganda posters printed for special occasions and publicly displayed inside buildings and in the streets of Buenos Aires. In a poster announcing the inauguration of the Universidad Obrera [Worker’s University] (Fig. 57) in 1948, a man stands in the foreground. One of his hands firmly holds a gear, while the other firmly grabs a book. The man is dressed as a machine operator, with tucked sleeves and an apron. His facial expression denotes determination: his eyes are focused in the distance and his lips appear tense—almost bitter—as if he were making a great effort. The same notion of effort and determination is denoted by the slim but muscular arm that holds the gear and by the bony but stern hand that holds the book. Behind the worker stands an architectural structure consisting of a cube with an arched perforation. The structure clearly recalls a triumphal arch, but it is completely deprived of ornament, as if to suggest that this building is not pompous or traditional, and that it is new and even modern—modern architecture, as I discuss in the next chapter, was associated with lack of ornament and monumentality. Above the arch, capital letters announce that this is the Universidad Obrera [Workers’ University] and above the letters is the Argentine national coat of arms. The caption at the bottom of the poster reads “Comisión Nacional de

Aprendizaje y Orientación Profesional” (CNAOP) [National Commission of Learning and Professional Orientation]. As scholar Marcela Gené explains:

In the propaganda poster of CNAOP, the book and the gear which are exhibited as the characteristic attributes of the worker refer to the objectives sought by the new educational project which proposed the integral formation of the worker, primarily in the technical field but which also included political and cultural instruction through a curriculum which combined the history of trade unions with the rudiments of labor law.²⁹⁹

Working-class access to higher education—a kind of education that was not only technical but which also made workers aware of their rights—was congenial with the ends of Peronist “social justice,” which reclaimed for workers the same self-awareness of their dignity that only the middle and upper classes had enjoyed in the past.

Another highly symbolic poster celebrated the first five years since the foundation of the Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social in 1948 (Fig. 58). This institution was a conspicuous government dependency because Perón himself had been the first Secretary. From this Secretaría, he had instrumented his early policies of “social justice.” The poster’s background shows a blinded figure of justice, with the attributes of the sword and scales. In the foreground stands the silhouette of a muscular male figure in defiant position and holding an anvil. The silhouette appears to wear no shirt and wears a handkerchief around the neck—a clear referent to Perón’s “shirtless workers.” The caption at the bottom reads “Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión, 5th anniversary of its creation, 1943—November 27th—1948” In using a traditional figure of justice, the poster legitimizes Peronist social justice as a valid and worthy kind of justice. It also reinforces the message that it was the workers who were the recipients of social justice.

A third poster from 1948, *Día de la Raza* (Fig. 59), shows two figures. The foreground shows a stereotyped and westernized face and torso of an aboriginal female. In the background stands a female figure representing a white princess or queen. Ironically, the aboriginal's facial features conform to Hollywood's standards of beauty from this period (full lips, oval face, large, almond-shaped eyes, and rosy cheeks). The aboriginal is represented with a seemingly nude torso (even though we can only see up to her shoulders). By contrast, the figure in the background is fully dressed, with dress and headdress. At the bottom, the caption reads *Día de la Raza*—literally, “Day of the Race.” The poster clearly symbolizes a reconciliation of races on a commemoration that had typically celebrated the “discovery” of the American continent by the Spaniards and, ultimately, the colonization of former aboriginal territories and the conversion to Catholicism of the original inhabitants.³⁰⁰ Here, the emphasis is reversed as the figure in the foreground is the conquered aboriginal. The figure in the background (probably an allusion to the celebrated Isabel la Católica, or maybe a figure symbolizing Catholic Spain, is present as an overseer, but she is not the protagonist. The poster is congruent with the postulates of “social justice” in the sense that it shows a revalorization of social subjects which had generally been regarded as negligible—the poor, the uneducated worker, the aboriginal. On the other hand, Peronism did not promote a social or political revolution in which former underdogs would become the leaders—it promoted a protectionist state and a corporatist society in which the government would regulate and oversee the harmonious relationship between the corporations, such as between the patrons associations and the workers’ unions. This system, Perón believed, would help

prevent individualist egoism and bloody confrontation.³⁰¹ Therefore, the new figure of race did not confront the Catholic colonizer but stood moderately in front of it, and both of them looked dignified and content. The representation is ultimately successful in conveying the revised significance of the aboriginal without erasing the invigilation of the aboriginal by the Catholic Church.

Besides painted posters, photography had a special role in the construction of Peronist propaganda. One such image was a poster promoting Barrio Saavedra (Fig. 60), one of the many examples of Peronist public housing. Barrio Saavedra was built by the Ministry of Public Works in 1948. Like the Peronist government, previous administrations had been relatively concerned about public housing for moral and hygienic reasons. Yet, from the Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión, Perón created the General Housing Administration in May 1945, which projected the construction of 20,000 units per year. While this ambitious project was not fully realized, many new neighborhoods were built in Buenos Aires, including Barrio Aeropuerto, Barrio 17 de Octubre, Barrio General Perón, Ciudad Evita, and Barrio 1ero. de Marzo, and others in the rest of the country. The poster of Barrio Saavedra, with its individual houses planned for nuclear families, illustrated one of Perón's realizations for the workers.³⁰²

Another propaganda poster was a photograph of the demonstrations of October 17th, 1945, which first appeared in a brochure, published by the Ministry of Circulation in 1946, and was later made into a poster. This photograph (Fig. 61) documented the massive worker's demonstration of October 17th, 1945, which had demanded Perón's liberation and return to his posts. Since November 1943, Perón had been instrumental in

establishing significant social benefits for unionized workers—minimum wage, retirement, compensation for termination of employment, an end-of-the year bonus, and many others—but these measures had caused severe friction between the military government and conservative sectors. On October 9th, 1945, the government demanded Perón's resignation and sought to imprison him, and within the next few days, the benefits which Perón had negotiated with the unions were all annulled. On October 17th, hundreds of thousands of workers from the outskirts of the city marched onto downtown Buenos Aires demanding Perón's liberation. The photograph caught the moment of expectation in which the demonstrators were waiting for Perón, now liberated, to make his public address from a balcony of the government palace.

As propaganda photographs, the Poster of October 17th and the Poster of Barrio Saavedra were naturalistic and easily legible. In the first place, the seeming objectivity of the images was the result of their medium. As photographs, the images resembled pieces of news rather than carefully constructed propaganda. The photographer also enhanced the images' naturalistic appearance by photographing the scenes from a high and distant point of view, i.e., a point of view that fostered the illusion of spatial depth. In the case of the poster of October 17th, the high point of view also contributed to visually aggrandizing the number of people congregated to reclaim Perón's liberation. The point of view also helped create a visual contrast between the multitude of unidentified faces and the unmistakable face of Perón. The implication was that the multitude unitedly and overwhelmingly supported Perón.

In the case of the poster of Barrio Saavedra, the high point of view not only enhanced the illusion of receding space but also allowed the viewer to catch a very legible view of the architectural signifiers of Peronist social justice. The design of the houses metaphorically referred to this central feature of Peronist rhetoric, which translated in the government's distribution among the unprivileged classes of everything that had previously only belonged to the privileged ones. The houses were decorated by slanted roofs with red Spanish tiles which were associated Mediterranean architecture. They imitated the chalet type or California style that the upper middle classes had adopted during the 1930s in the design of vacation houses.³⁰³ The Peronist houses, then, referred to the government's desire to grant workers with a very specific status symbol: the sign of leisure time and money. In the poster, the apparently objective and detached point of view was intentionally chosen to make the meaningful architectural components of the houses visible.

Both photographic compositions also aimed at being highly legible so that their messages would impact the public. In the poster of Barrio Saavedra, the street was used to symmetrically divide the scene and to trace a diagonal through the composition. Such a symmetrical division guaranteed an ordered reading of the two rows of houses, and helped to make visible the comparably smaller persons who stood among the larger buildings. The unidentified persons were a woman and three children who lovingly held hands in expectation of the house that the Peronist government was building for them. In the photograph of October 17th, the expressions of happiness in the faces of the demonstrators could be well distinguished because the scene had been photographed at

night with a powerful flash, so that the contrast between light and dark facilitated the reading of the image. The elated facial expressions would have been much more difficult to distinguish at a glance if the scene had been photographed with natural light.

The appearance of naturalism and the legibility of the above-described scenes contributed to mythologize different aspects of Peronist discourse: in the case of the poster of Barrio Saavedra, the image evoked the future of order and happiness promised by Perón; in the case of the photograph of October 17th, the image served to seal Perón's popularity. These images, then, did not simply represent reality: they constructed representations as objective observations and eased interpretation—they seemingly confirmed the correspondence between representation and reality, and in doing so, legitimized the government's policies and enticed the Argentine population to support them.

Peronist propaganda: an immediate experience

Since 1945 and into Perón's presidencies (1946-1952; 1952-1955), the Argentines' exposure to politicized representational images and texts was a central experience of everyday life. The Concrete and Madí artists, just like other members of Argentine society, would have experienced politically-charged images, both verbal and visual, as they walked through the city and listened to the radio, which Perón used extensively from the beginning of his rule. Before Perón took power, Argentines would seldom have had the chance to hear presidential radio appeals. Under the presidency of Roberto M. Ortiz (1938-1942), Argentine citizens were only able to hear two presidential

appeals. Yet during the nine years of Perón's rule, they were bombarded with almost two thousand speeches, which were aired simultaneously through entire radio networks and during the most popular time slots. In 1951, indeed, Perón transmitted speeches in the entire network of Argentine radios during five consecutive days to explain his five-year plan.³⁰⁴ Already during the presidential campaign which began in late 1945, Perón's voice and his portrait found ways to flood the city. A car bearing a painted portrait of Perón, his name, and the emblem of the Labor Party that he represented drove around spreading Peronist speeches and slogans through two prominently displayed loudspeakers (Fig. 62).

Peronist visual images also flooded the city, in the form of brochures, newspaper and magazine advertisements, and posters. Marcela Gené has researched the workings of the various state institutions and dependencies which were in charge of producing and distributing Peronist propaganda. She explains that when new photographs, posters, or propagandistic icons were released, the Dirección de Difusión [Office of Distribution] sent copies to every popular library, party unit, public school, state organism, and even to the Argentine embassies abroad. This entity was also in charge of distributing pins with the coat of arms of the Peronist Party, which were mandatory for all public employees and recommended in other work settings. Another office in charge of propaganda was the Dirección General de Publicidad [General Office of Publicity]. It distributed advertisements and photolithographs to the press, paying for spaces in periodicals which were already owned or administered by the state, and thus assigned them extra funding and a larger quota of paper. Finally, during special celebrations such as the annual commemoration of October 17th, 1945, the Dirección de Festejos y Ornamentaciones

[Office of Celebrations and Ornamentation] launched major campaigns which involved well-known draftsmen, architects, stage designers, and sculptors, such as the earlier-mentioned Troiano Troiani. New decorations were prepared every year—proof that the government did not refrain spending lavishly for the sake of propaganda. Several offices were in charge of building and decorating plaster casts of colossal allegorical figures—at least six meters high—for public display. These were also used to cast light and resistant papier maché sculptures which were colored with synthetic paint. On occasions such as this, walls were also painted with propaganda images, such as the mural “El pueblo liberó a su líder” [The People Liberated Its Leader] (Fig. 63), which was originally a poster and was then painted as a mural on the central Avenida 9 de julio.³⁰⁵

These government-led instances, in turn, were spontaneously emphasized by anonymous slogans. Slogans such as “Perón 1946,” “Long live Perón,” “Vote for Coronel Perón,” “Perón Future President,” and, “Sun of the Poor,” (Fig. 64) visually and audibly saturated the everyday activities of citizens. The general effect was that, as people walked, rode public means of transportation, or drove cars, they would have tangibly perceived both the sentimental and symbolic messages of Peronist rhetoric and the president’s popularity.

In this situation, is it possible to posit a dialogue between the representational images massively spread by Peronist propaganda, and anti-representational and marginal works of art of the Concrete and Madí artists? Certainly, it would be naïve to suggest a relation of causality, i.e., to argue that the all-pervading images promoted by the Peronist government could have been the single spark which prompted the Concrete and Madí

artists to elaborate their anti-representational strategies. Prior to the rise of Peronism, the journal *Arturo* had already discussed the core ideas that by 1946 were the credo of the Madí and Concrete artists. Secondly, the intention to avoid representation on the part of the Concrete and Madí artists clearly relied on their scattered interpretation of the work and ideas of the European avant-garde and of other local sources (discussed in chapters 1 and 2). Yet it would be equally naïve to believe that the Concrete and Madí artists—just like any other members of Argentine society in the second part of the 1940s—could have avoided experiencing Peronist images in the course of their everyday lives, or that they would not have formed impressions and opinions about them. At the very least, the overbearing presence of Peronist images in Buenos Aires would have intensified and helped define the aesthetic preoccupations of the Madí and Concrete artists.

A few intriguing aspects of the artistic practice of the Madí and Concrete artists, furthermore, suggest that the artists were aware that the photographic medium played a central role in the construction of a mythologized reality. In their manifesto, the Madí artists never listed photography as one of the media in which Madí works could be realized. The absence of photography from among other listed media—painting, sculpture, drawing, music, dance, theater, poetry, short story, architecture, and others—is specially conspicuous considering that it was a photographer (the Bauhaus-trained emigré Grete Stern) who encouraged the Madí group in its early days.³⁰⁶ The only photographic work associated with the Madí group is, in fact, not a photograph but a photomontage by Stern (Fig. 65), i.e., an image which purposefully and obviously manipulates photographic exposures to create a new, ‘unnaturalistic’ image.³⁰⁷ On their side, the Concrete artists

appear to have proposed that their Concrete works were valid vehicles for educational and political propaganda for the Communist party, as opposed to representational images which evoked “subjective and expressionist necessities.”³⁰⁸ For the Concrete and Madí artists, then, perceiving the mythologizing intention of Peronist imagery in the context of their everyday experiences would have reinforced their anti-representational discourse.

Perón himself was also well aware that naturalistic representation bore propagandistic possibilities and that it helped spread his popularity. Regarding the planning of the Monument of the Shirtless Worker, which he first announced on October 17th, 1946, during the commemoration of the historical date of October 17th 1945, Perón commented that:

I think that it would be interesting to make a Monument that is profoundly evocative, for the simple reason that it will be an eminently popular monument, that in its shape and conception, it must be easily interpreted. It must not be anything complicated but something that our people will understand, and [our people] understand what impresses their senses and their feelings.

The monument must be simple, and it must represent the people in its conception through the different epochs of our history. Its central figure must be that of the shirtless worker, that which we all know and we see in the street, that of the shirtless worker we saw on October 17th.

...

We must make a shirtless worker as similar as possible to the true shirtless worker.³⁰⁹

Thus, Perón made a case for the evocative, representational capacity and the legibility of the future monument. The monument needed to be both naturalistic and legible, he stated, because the shirtless worker needed to be drawn to it by sentiment: the monument was expected to elicit emotion. The monument for the shirtless worker, however, would be saturated with signifiers of social retribution: signifiers which its author would deliberately insert throughout the work so that workers were drawn to it

through feeling and self-identification. This attitude towards artistic creation, in fact, was the exact opposite of that of the Concrete and Madí artists.

In the second part of the 1940s, then, representational images and texts came to inundate everyday life in a way that Argentine society had not seen before. Politically-charged images associated with Peronist policies took over the streets. I have suggested that in this context, the works and ideas of the Madí and Concrete artists operated in a tense oppositional dialogue, not only with traditional art, representation, and expression as general categories, but also, at this very specific moment in time, with Peronist images, which employed mechanisms that were anathema to the ideas and strategies that of the artists. In avoiding representation, the Concrete and Madí artists sought to disrupt the very representational strategies which Peronist propaganda resorted to: they broke the shape that facilitated the illusion of depth, they suppressed the background, and they disrupted the fixity of forms and the legibility of the painted design. In the naturalistic and legible Peronist images, then, they would have found plenty of visual material against which to pound their own ideas, if only for a very reduced or exclusive public.

Allegiances of dissidence

Besides producing works which may be regarded as loci for their opposition to Peronism, the Concrete and Madí artists demonstrated their opposition to Perón in other ways. The main one was their support of Communism and, in the case of the Concrete artists, their affiliation to the Argentine Communist Party (PCA) in September 1945. The Concrete and Madí artists saw themselves as participants in the ongoing construction of a

“classless society” and therefore, they would have interpreted Perón’s labor policies as fictions which were only preventing and delaying the realization of this classless society. This was also the position of the Communist leaders of the PCA, who attacked Perón’s labor measures and benefits because they sabotaged the workers’ class conscience. The Communist leader Victorio Codovilla, for example, argued that:

As it is well known, the objective of Peronism consists, precisely, in granting temporary concessions to some workers’ sectors, with the premeditated intention of destroying their independent, class-bound organizations and of forcing them to enter state unions. These are nothing but political instruments which the totalitarian state employs. Once it has consolidated itself in power, [the state] will move on to worsen the conditions of life and work of the people.³¹⁰

While Codovilla argued that Peronism sought to break class-bound organizations, and thus, to compromise the workers’ class conscience, Perón himself described the labor decrees and fringe benefits he had granted as measures which would prevent “a violent revolution” in Argentina. In a famous speech he gave on August 7th, 1945, before army students in the Military College, Perón claimed that:

If the French Revolution ended with the rule of the aristocracy, the Russian Revolution ends with the rule of the bourgeoisie: the rule of the popular masses begins.... If we don’t make the peaceful revolution, the people will make the violent revolution. The solution to this problem is to bring social justice to the masses. This is the remedy which, suppressing the cause, will also suppress the effect. And since the beginning of the world, social work is only done in one way: taking away from those who have a lot to give to those who have too little. Undoubtedly, this will raise the reaction and resistance from these men (the businessmen), who are the worst enemies of their own happiness, because they are going to loose in a few years, or in a few months, everything they own, plus their ears for not granting a 30 percent.³¹¹

Communist leaders were disgusted at the fact that Perón was dazzling the workers with benefits to prevent a revolution, and thus they warned the workers that “it is very easy...to say that the Secretariat of Labor and Welfare has conquered this or that benefit

for this or that group of workers; what we really need to know is whether this is a true and long lasting benefit, or whether it concerns a *fictitious* and *unstable* benefit.”³¹² In view of this, it is not surprising that the Concrete artists perceived the Communist party as an institution which adequately combated “fictions.” Upon joining the party on September 1945, they ardently praised the party for:

fighting, daily, devotedly and intelligently, against the regressive tendencies which corrupt human existence and put obstacles against its physical and spiritual development; because the Marxist-Leninist thought which the PC practices exalts man’s greatness and his realizing capacity and it negates the fictions which humiliate and sterilize him in every field...³¹³

That the Concrete artists joined the Argentine Communist Party when Perón was rising to power sheds light upon their perception of the Peronist phenomenon. Other clues emerge from the fact that Perón’s opponents, including the Communist Party, perceived him as a Fascist, while as discussed in chapter 3, *Arturo*’s own discourse inserted the Concrete and Madí artists in the front against Fascism. As Perón was gaining popularity with the unions in the last months of 1944 and during 1945, those persons who opposed Nazism and Fascism and who, in the local front, reclaimed the return to democracy, came to interpret Perón as the willing representative of Fascism in Argentina. Towards the end of 1945, they began to focus their strength on opposing Perón in democratic elections and formed the Democratic Union. The Democratic Union included various disparate groups. The Radicals dominated this coalition, but alongside stood the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and even the conservative National Democratic Party. As historian Marcela García Sebastiani shows, the leaders of the Democratic Union devoted much of their campaign to portraying Perón as the local version of the totalitarian movements of

Fascism and Nazism in Argentina.³¹⁴ Thus, for example, in an act of the electoral campaign which the Democratic Union celebrated in La Plata in January 1946, the Socialist Nicolás Repetto claimed that:

The programs of social policies which intend to dazzle [people] with urgent applications and without any practical sense of reality are those which seduce the masses—always needy and avid of reform—and which unscrupulous politicians display with proselytizing purposes....The program which the Duce promised...seduced more than a few workers...it served its author to implant a rigid dictatorship exclusively exercised by him which lasted almost a quarter of a century. The Führer's plan of action was also approved through plebiscite with a dazzling program of the so-called 25 points... At this hour in our country, the disastrous experience realized in the mentioned nations is being prepared.³¹⁵

The Democratic Union, then, spread the word that Perón was a new Duce or a new Führer. Around these days, in fact, Perón's opponents coined the term "Nazi-Peronism." On December 22nd, 1945, the above-cited Argentine Communist leader Vittorio Codovilla published a pamphlet entitled "Let's defeat Nazi-Peronism to open an era of freedom and progress." Codovilla devoted an entire chapter of this book to explain why "Peronism is Fascism" and described why and how "Nazi-Peronism" needed to be combated.³¹⁶ Against Perón and his proto-Nazi project, stated Codovilla, stood the Democratic Union, which included the following groups of the population:

- 1.—All the traditional political parties.
- 2.—The most combative and class-conscious part of the workers' movement and of the rural workers.
- 3.—The immense majority of the university student youth, of the intellectuals and artists, of professionals, of teachers, of employees, of the middle classes.
- 4.—The progressive sectors of industry and commerce, of agriculture and cattle raising, of finance.
- 5.—The majority of the army and of the navy, and a part of the police force.
- 6.—The democratic catholic sectors.
- 7.—All of the country's press, with the exception of the Peronist pamphlets.³¹⁷

Like Codovilla's book, the journal *Orientación*, where the Concrete artists made their declarations in favor of the Communist party, was abundant in articles and advertisements which portrayed Peronism as Fascism and the Unión Democrática as the party that defended freedom and democracy. On October 24th, 1945, for example, *Orientación* published an article entitled "Only the united and organized democratic forces will be able to defeat pro-Fascist Peronism" which pleaded for all Communists to unite against Perón in the name of democracy.³¹⁸

The Democratic Union ran against Perón and his running mate Hortensio Quijano in February 1946. To the dismay of the Democratic Union, Perón's coalition, the Labor Party, won the election with 52 percent of votes. In June 1946, Perón legitimately took presidential power and, until the end of the decade, he continued to transform the country in the direction he had launched during the military dictatorship.³¹⁹

Writing about the first three years of Perón's government, the historian Felix Luna has commented that "Argentina was a party."³²⁰ Salaries kept rising—to the extent that by 1948, salaries generated 53 % of the national income—while capitalist profits also increased because those whom Perón's policies benefitted became consumers.³²¹ Yet the new government continued to find great resistance on the part of the middle class and opposition parties, since it continuously displayed authoritarian attitudes and measures. A few days before assuming the presidency, Perón ordered the dissolution of the coalition which had supported his candidacy—the Labor Party. Six months later, the Labor Party came to be officially called "Peronist Party" and by December 1947, article 31 of the statutes of the Peronist Party empowered Perón to modify all decisions made by the party

as well as to review all candidates. Shortly after taking office, the new president began to replace local authorities in the provinces with officials appointed by the central administration. His administration also purged the Supreme Court and the universities. Even before taking presidential power, universities were intervened by decree and on May 4th, 1946, Oscar Ivanissevich was named Interventionist Delegate. Throughout this year, thousands of professors were fired and students were expelled. In May 1947, the members of the Supreme Court were dismissed as part of a general purge of the judiciary. Also in 1947, training schools run by opposition parties and groups were closed, and the regime began to buy the radio broadcasting system.³²² In sum, these first years of Peronism saw the gradual suppression of public freedoms.

During this period, the Madí and Concrete artists continued to insert themselves within anti-Peronist circles. The Concrete artists were members of the Communist party until around September 1948, and their writings reveal their intense involvement with Marxism and with Soviet communism.³²³ Meanwhile, the Madí artists held exhibitions in cultural institutions which became spaces of resistance and dissidence to official institutions. In October 1946, the Madí group exhibited at Altamira: Escuela Libre de Artes Plásticas [Altamira: Free School of Plastic Arts] and in August 1948 at the Teatro del Pueblo [Theater of the People]. Both of these institutions were independent entities run by artists and writers who disagreed with the official cultural policies and consequently maintained an independent network relatively immune to government vigilantism. By exhibiting within this independent network of resistance and avoiding

any involvement with official institutions, the Madí artists inscribed themselves in the anti-Peronist cultural front.

As per its announcement, the Madí group presented its second exhibition at the “Salon Altamira,” located at Av. Alvear 2950, from October 14th until October 31st, 1946.³²⁴ A photo of the exhibition shows a haphazard display of cut-out frames, articulated paintings, and articulated sculptures on and near the wall (Fig. 66). While the only critical review of this show was ambivalent, it is significant that it was Altamira: Escuela Libre de Artes Plásticas, that cared to sponsor an exhibition of these artists.³²⁵ Funded by Gonzalo Losada, Spanish emigre and owner of the successful publishing house bearing his name, the Altamira faculty group included the art critic Jorge Romero Brest, the sculptor Lucio Fontana, and the painters Jorge Larco, Raúl Soldi, Atilio Rossi, and Emilio Pettoruti—all of whom were well-respected artists.³²⁶ This private school, which had opened just a few months earlier, was a site where artists and critics would impart artistic knowledge outside of government vigilance. At Altamira, wrote Romero Brest,

“each professor will have the greatest freedom to organize the teachings of the workshop he directs,” even though we all agree to facilitate the students’ direct learning with the professors. This is our common program for now. Since we are attempting an experience, we cannot restrict or limit the didactic impulse of each professor.³²⁷

In this article, published in the magazine *Saber Vivir*, Romero Brest emphasized that Altamira was a school, but one in which freedom prevailed. He thus commented that “to teach is to “form,” exploring aptitudes, not imposing formulas,” and noted that “the teaching of skills, regardless of their essential role, should be nothing but a result of the

spirit.”³²⁸ Towards the end of the article, the author again called forth the “freedom of the spirit” as a central objective of the new school.³²⁹ At Altamira, then, each student would explore without restrictions whatever knowledge each professor wished to teach.

The foundation of a “free” school of plastic arts on the part of these artists and writers can be interpreted as a response to the oppressive experiences they were living in government-regulated institutions. Romero Brest was professor of history of art at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata; Fontana taught sculpture at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes “Manuel Belgrano;” and Pettoruti was the Director of the Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes de La Plata.³³⁰ Yet since 1943, the military government had intervened in all of these institutions and after 1946 so did the Peronist government. The major concern had been to eradicate all forms of politics in the university and to introduce Catholic religion, military instruction, and patriotic teachings as part of the mandatory university curricula. While professors and students had responded with demonstrations and strikes, the government fired professors and expelled students who openly opposed the measures. On November 2nd, 1943, the government intervened in all universities and installed as their directors, persons who were closely associated with the Catholic Church. On November 5th, the Argentine University Federation (FUA), the national association of university students, was declared illegal, and all the student associations that depended on it were closed. On January 1st, 1944, Catholic education was introduced by decree in all educational institutions dependent on the national government, including the universities. While most of these measures were revoked for a few months in 1945 as the military government appeared to be crumbling, Perón again declared his preference for Catholic

education during his presidential campaign in early 1946. Finally, on April 30th, 1946, upon his election as president, Perón named Oscar Ivanissevich as Interventor of the city of Buenos Aires. Ivanissevich also acted as Secretary of Education and later, as Minister of Education until May 27th, 1949. The new Secretary of Education was a self-declared anti-liberal and anti-rationalist militant who admired the military and the Church. For him, hierarchy among persons played an important role in the structuring of society, and he perceived free thinking as a factor that destroyed hierarchy.³³¹ For Ivanissevich, a “free” school in which teachers taught what they wished and students researched according to their own interests would have embodied social chaos.

It was in this oppressive context that Altamira, an alternative art school whose main ideal was to promote “freedom,” chose to sponsor an exhibition of the Madí, a marginal group of artists with leftist political inclinations. Their association, then, mutually defined both groups—Altamira and the Madí—as strongholds of dissidence. Almost two years after their initial exhibition at Altamira, on August 1948, the Madí artists held an exhibition and audition of contemporary music at the Teatro del Pueblo.³³² As Fig. 67 shows, the viewing of Madí paintings and sculptures accompanied the experience of the music audition. As with their exhibition at Altamira, it is significant that the anti-establishment Madí artists would have chosen the Teatro del Pueblo, an independent theater, to display their creations. The theater had been founded on November 30th, 1930, by the writer Leónidas Barletta, a former member of the socially-concerned Boedo group that had been active in the early 1920s. In founding an “independent theater,” Barletta assumed the challenge of “realiz[ing] experiences of

modern theater, to save the corrupted dramatic art, and to take to the masses the general art, with the purpose of promoting the cultural elevation of our people.”³³³ Thus, Barletta intended to oppose with a high quality repertoire that included all the genres, styles, and dramatic tendencies—from the classic to the modern ones—the pitiful works that commercial theaters in Buenos Aires were promoting. The military government, however, appears to have interpreted this theater as subversive.³³⁴ Historian Luis Ordaz provides insights into why the military government may have condemned the Teatro del Pueblo:

The theater of Corrientes 1530...in 1937 took the name of Teatro del Pueblo, and was transformed from that moment in an authentic School of Humanities, a deeply popular one, with neither entrance exams nor granting of degrees. The “courses” that were taught there were open and freely dictated, and they never concluded. In this theater, which could seat 1550 persons...not only plays and dances were offered but also concerts, exhibitions of various kinds, speakers’ series. Also, plays authored by national writers were published, as well as a journal: *Conducta*.³³⁵

Just like the Altamira school, the Teatro del Pueblo was a site where cultural productions were not under the jurisdiction of the government. The institution provided an alternative to official institutions of learning which were plagued by authoritarian decrees and regulations. The events held at the Teatro del Pueblo, in fact, drew the attention of the military government, which expelled it from its locale. Ordaz continues to say that:

In spite of all this [cultural activity] (or, more exactly, because of it), after the military coup of 1943, reactionary members of the government were in charge of the Municipal government of the city of Buenos Aires and one of their first jobs was to evict Barletta and his people from the theater....

Barletta and his fellows defended like tigers their theater until finally their doors were forced with police squads and the fire department. The latter heaped municipal garbage trucks, up to the top, with costumes, furniture, paintings,

lights, books, etc, that had filled four floors and that had been used to offer art and culture. Since he could not just put down his arms and turn himself in, Barletta and his people took refuge in the basement of Diagonal Norte 943, in front of which, until very recently, there stood a small sign that announced: Teatro del Pueblo.³³⁶

Barletta's Teatro del Pueblo, then, was an institution heavily charged with connotations of insubordination and resistance: it sought to defy commercial projects and it resisted—as much as it could—the authoritarian mandates of the military government. That the Madí artists held a show in 1948 at the Teatro del Pueblo, then, further tinted and reinforced the artists' own insubordinate attitude.

Through their involvement with the Communist Party, the Escuela Altamira, and the Teatro del Pueblo, the Madí and the Concrete artists situated themselves within circles that acted as foci of resistance and dissidence to Peronism. These circles, I should note, neither embraced nor applauded the Madí and Concrete aesthetic propositions, but their gesture to sponsor their art revealed their willingness to present themselves as pluralistic and open-minded: a gesture which, in the political climate of the mid- and late 1940s, was one of defiance to the authoritarian aspects of Perón's rule.

Other possibilities

In addition to the above-developed interpretation, it may be argued that the aesthetic choices and attitudes of the Concrete and Madí artists were a confrontational response to the aesthetic choices and attitudes of other contemporary artists, especially those whose works were being shown and successfully recognized in the second part of the 1940s. Both government-sponsored and independent institutions promoted artists

who, despite their distinct aesthetic choices, advocated various expressive forms of figurative and abstract art. In 1946, the first year of Perón's rule, the National Salon showed, among many other artists, the works of Ramón Gomez Cornet, Raquel Forner, Antonio Berni, Miguel Carlos Victorica, Demetrio Urruchua, Juan Carlos Castagnino, Raúl Soldi, Juan Del Prete, and the then-figurative sculptor Lucio Fontana.³³⁷ The XIII Salón de Otoño of the same year showcased works by some of these same artists (e.g., Urruchua, Soldi, Castagnino, Fontana), and added those of Lino Enea Spilimbergo, Horacio Butler, Andrés Calabrese, Mané Bernardo, Marina Bengoechea, among many others.³³⁸ Two years later, in 1948, the Salón Nacional awarded the most important prizes to Juan Carlos Castagnino, Luis Borraro, and Enrique Estrada Bello. Other artists featured were Raúl Soldi, Eugenio Daneri, Emilio Pettoruti, and Miguel Carlos Victorica.³³⁹ Moreover, the independent Salón Peuser held a one-person exhibition of Emilio Pettoruti.³⁴⁰ This information points at two conclusions: first, that, in its interventions of the art scene (e.g., the National Salon), the Peronist government did not sponsor or promote artists different from those promoted by independent institutions (e.g., the Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos or the Salón Peuser). Secondly, it shows that in the art scene of the second part of the 1940s, the great majority of the recognized artists favored figurative art and individual expression. Both of these aesthetic choices were furiously rejected by the Concrete and Madí artists. While the stark contrast between the work of the Concrete and Madí artists, and the work of those artists recognized during the first years of the Peronist government is evident, I believe that it is an oversimplification to assume that the Concrete and Madí artists were reacting to their

contemporary art scene. The dichotomy established by this analysis suggests that Concrete and Madí art was simply a reaction to figurative art, and this analysis, in turn, reduces Concrete and Madí works as merely formalist types of abstract art. Yet as the historical documents indicate, Concrete and Madí artists perceived that their works could foster social and political change. This is why it seems that it is more effective to interpret their ideas and their production as a contrast, and possibly a response, to the political propaganda of the Peronist government, and not just to the government's artistic choices.

CHAPTER 5

Changing paths:

Concrete and Madí art and the experience of Peronism in the 1950s

During the 1940s, the Concrete and Madí artists had focused on avoiding representation, arguing that representational images fostered idealist “fictions of things”³⁴¹ and “idealist, subjective, reactionary description.”³⁴² They theorized that their artistic production corresponded to the world’s political transition to a classless society. In the 1950s, however, they no longer upheld these beliefs, and their works strengthened or altogether initiated dialogues with other disciplines: science, architecture, visual communication, and urbanism. Scholars agree that an important factor in this change was the regular interaction of the Argentine artists with European Concrete artists and modern architects, which began in 1948.³⁴³ This year, a local *Salón de Nuevas Realidades* that included the Concrete and Madí artists, as well as Argentine modern architects and urban planners opened in Buenos Aires at Van Riel Gallery. On this occasion, the artists had a chance to hear a talk entitled “Situating Concrete Art,” by the Italian modern architect Ernesto Rogers, who was visiting Argentina.³⁴⁴ Eventually, Rogers introduced Maldonado to the Swiss Concrete artist Max Bill, and the latter directed him to Vordemberge-Gildewart, Georges Vantongerloo, Richard Paul Lohse, and Max Huber. Maldonado eventually met all of them personally during his visit to Europe the same year, and he came to greatly admire Bill and his art.³⁴⁵

Just as the Concrete artists turned to design, architecture, and urbanism in the 1950s, Kosice explored the possibilities of “Madí architecture” during the same period. Writer Jorge B. Rivera, for example, notes that Kosice’s one person show at Bonino Gallery, held in September 1953, documented “considerable conceptual advances, in the first place, the abandonment of small-scale works, the work ‘for interiors’, in favor of the ‘communal’ work, conceived for great urban spaces.”³⁴⁶ Kosice had first mentioned “Madí architecture” in the 1946 Madí Manifesto, but he would not fully materialize or conceptualize this idea until 1953-54. While Rivera does not elaborate on the causes of Kosice’s renewed interest in architecture, the primary sources suggest that the artist’s viewing of Walter Gropius’ work at the II São Paulo Biennial in 1953 was an important factor.³⁴⁷ In 1954, Kosice would formulate a severe critique of functional architecture and propose a Madí architecture that integrated non-functional elements with functional structures. His renewed concern with the medium of architecture, at any rate, was seemingly fired by his encounter with Gropius’ designs.

By the early 1950s, the production of the Concrete and the Madí artists was receiving the impact of a number of European designers, artists, and architects. These encounters, scholars believe, fostered the Argentine artists’ interest in the media of architecture, design, and visual communication. Yet a second important factor that may have nurtured the artists’ new interests was their immediate experience of Peronism. On the one hand, the Concrete artists’ everyday experience of Peronist mass propaganda may have encouraged them to reformulate their social role. On the other, the growing predominance of modern and functionalist architecture in Buenos Aires, which owed in

part to Peronist architectural policies, could have encouraged Madí artists to formulate an alternative: Madí architecture. This chapter, then, explores specific instances of the artists' dialogue with the culture of Peronism.

Concrete art as a cultural remedy

Two articles published in *Nueva Visión*, one by Maldonado and one by Hlito, document the changing attitudes of the Concrete artists in the early 1950s. In “Significado y Arte Concreto” [“Meaning and Concrete Art”], from 1953, Hlito complained that very little could be said about what Concrete art sought to positively communicate. Artists and viewers, he lamented, only knew what Concrete art did **not** intend to communicate—representational images—but beyond that, nobody was aware of how to approach their art.³⁴⁸ In “Actualidad y Porvenir del Arte Concreto” [“Present and future of Concrete art”], from December 1951, Maldonado argued that “manifestos of the polemical type, poetic prose in the form of manifestos, aphorisms, etc” were futile.³⁴⁹ Thus, in the early 1950s, he seemingly perceived as pointless confrontational texts like those the Concrete artists had written in the 1940s. In this article, he also dispelled the major justification that the artists had given for the existence of Concrete art in the 1940s: that, with Concrete art and invention, the history of art had ended, and that its culmination corresponded to the political transition of the world towards Communism. “Today, in 1951,” he wrote, “we the Concrete artists obviously know that the history of art must continue to develop after Concrete art...We don’t commit—in any way—the Hegelian sin.”³⁵⁰ These two articles signaled the Concrete artists’ dismissal of three of the

most important notions that had characterized their activities in the 1940s: that Concrete art was completely anti-representational, that it encouraged polemic, and that the history of art ended with it.

Maldonado continued to explain a few fundamental characteristics of the new Concrete art:

Thus, Concrete art is saturated with ideas that are subtly transmitted to the spectator. Its “content”—since this is the question—exalts rationality and faith in the power of man’s aesthetic invention; unlike other manifestations, it communicates not states of moralistic renunciation or of anguish but of joy and of constructive will.³⁵¹

He also explained that Concrete art expressed the artists’ interest in the new scientific discoveries, namely, “the new notions revealed by micro-physics, by cosmogonist and gravitational theories” that “have radically changed the perspectives of human sensitivity.”³⁵² In his view, the new Concrete art was called to progressively sensitize humans to the new scientific notions. Therefore, while, in the 1940s, the Concrete artists had believed that their art “corresponded” to the historical stage of Communism, they now speculated about its timely correspondence with the scientific explorations of their contemporary era.³⁵³ The artist also commented on the fact that Concrete art “is destined to be the social art of the future, for it is the only one that can fluidly articulate itself with the great urban spaces that will be invented in the future.”³⁵⁴ Earlier, the artists had not been overly preoccupied with the question of how their art would reach a large public. They simply imagined that, eventually, history would take care of this problem, since they seemingly saw the victory of Concrete art above other artistic manifestations as inevitable.³⁵⁵ Yet now Maldonado argued that the impact of

Concrete art on larger audiences was contingent upon its integration with urban spaces. He thus perceived that the key to the success of Concrete art rested not in the dialectical movement of history but in its integration with other disciplines: architecture, design, and urbanism. Concrete art would only change society if society had access to it.

Concrete paintings from this period show how the artists visualized the changes in their artistic practice. The Concrete works of the 1950s continued to be geometric and non-figurative like those of the 1940s but their focus was no longer how to avoid representation, the illusion of depth, or meaning. Instead, they sought to suggest certain perceptions—vibrations, shifts, falls—with a limited repertoire of formal means—pure lines and solid colors. One example is a work by Lidy Prati, *Estructura Vibracional desde un Círculo* [Structure vibrating from a circle], from ca. 1951 (Fig. 68). As the title indicates, viewers experience the perception of a vibration or a tension as they visually follow the traces of two lines. The lines are distant at the bottom of the painting, then they approach towards the curve, and finally they separate towards the top. The effect of vibration also emerges from the uneven firmness of the lines, both of which appear sensitive yet controlled. In Maldonado's *Tema sobre Rojo* [Theme over red], from ca. 1953 (Fig. 69), the “theme” is an unbalanced array of lines and planes that are seemingly falling into a void. This theme appears to hang from the upper portion of the pictorial plane. The perception of a fall is emphasized by two long lines along which three shapes seem to be sliding: the work evokes instability. Hlito's *Sin título* [Untitled], from ca. 1952 (Fig. 70), also challenges traditional representations of space on the pictorial plane. The ochre and black lines suggest different views of a corner in an interior space. Yet two black lines

projecting downwards indicate a fourth direction which would be impossible in a three-dimensional interior space. The borders of the orange-red plane do not meet with any lines, and this, again, suggests an altered, shifted perception. Prati, Maldonado, and Hlito, then, explored different perceptions—vibration, fall, shift—using a variety of strategies. Their paintings sought to stimulate the mind of viewers with a sense of discovery, and thus, to sensitize them to the new.

During this period, the Concrete artists came to conceive of their paintings as explorations to new perceptual and conceptual frontiers, in contrast to traditional images, which dealt with known forms and experiences. Against these repeated and repetitive forms and experiences, the Concrete artists viewed their production as an expression which tended to ensure the “densification and enrichment” of culture and, in the end, as a cultural, social, and moral remedy against a decadent society.³⁵⁶ In 1953, in an article entitled “Problemas Actuales de la Comunicación” [“Current problems in communication”], Maldonado argued that artists bore a social duty: they were “responsible for (or accomplice[s] to) for everything that takes place in the eyes of the common man; of everything that inhabits them: ghosts, [*hipogrifos*], or certitudes. They can’t ignore that their mission is to fabricate ideologies or to actively participate in their demolition.”³⁵⁷ In the 1950s, then, Maldonado believed that artists had a role equivalent to that of publicists, or as he called them, as “specialist[s] in visual communication,” who “to some degree, always have a conscience (be it a good or a bad one) that they are operating in the neural knot of the society in which they live.”³⁵⁸ Images, and the specialists in visual communication that produced them, had the duty of elevating “the

society in which they live[d]” to a richer level of exploration and discovery, not to diminish it, sterilize it, or confine it to the same repetitive and unchallenged ideas.

Maldonado’s conception of the role of the artist as a specialist in visual communication was part of his sophisticated critique of how communication in contemporary culture had been degraded to the level of “chatter” [charla]. This contemporary “chatter” included “visual communication.” He argued that communication in everyday life was becoming rare because contemporary society was being increasingly bombarded by repetitive forms, both verbal and visual. He thus stated that:

One requires a very high dose of optimism or social disinterest to ignore that everyday forms of communication are almost non-existent in contemporary society....Today, communication in all its forms has been replaced by “chatter” [charla]. This chatter is not only verbal: it is also visual. Chatter is accomplished through a reduced repertoire of pseudo-signifying entities that are constantly being repeated. Thus, any words or images that still conserve their original force are always suspected by those who benefit from the expressive regime of chatter. It is in the transparency of the pseudo-signifying entities where the apparent communicability of chatter exists.”³⁵⁹

For Maldonado, contemporary culture was being increasingly impoverished by the never ending repetition of images and texts, to the extent that communication had assumed the vulgar form of chatter. Is it possible that Maldonado’s description of contemporary culture owed to the Concrete artists’ everyday experience of Peronist propaganda in the early 1950s? Is it conceivable that these artists’ experience of Peronism encouraged, to some extent, the changes that their art went through during this period?

Understanding the workings of Peronist propaganda, which Maldonado inevitably experienced in the course of his everyday life during these years, helps find possible

connections with his statements in “Problemas actuales de la comunicación.” In the 1950s, repetitive images portraying or including Perón and Eva Perón penetrated all the aspects of everyday life and of culture. On the one hand, these portraits were present in all government-sponsored events, which included the commemoration of national holidays and, especially, in events which sanctioned the government’s policies of “social justice,” such as the expropriation of the Bemberg beer factory by the government in 1955 (Fig. 71).³⁶⁰ Similar portraits were also featured in the covers and pages of the magazine *Mundo Peronista* (Fig. 72 through Fig. 79). First published in July 1951, this was a periodical compendium of propagandistic articles, photographs, and announcements that was displayed and sold in street kiosks and via subscriptions.³⁶¹ Similar portraits also penetrated daily activities, as they were printed on the most basic objects of everyday circulation—coins, bills, and stamps (Fig. 80). This, of course, guaranteed that everybody in Argentina was constantly forced into contact with these images, even when this contact was circumstantial and superficial. Portraits and slogans of Perón and Eva Perón were also massively and mandatorily absorbed in all the institutionalized processes of learning, as school textbooks and materials came to feature them. In 1952, Law 14,126 made *La Razón de mi Vida* [The Reason of my Life], the autobiography published by Eva Perón a year earlier, into a mandatory textbook for all levels of education.³⁶² The book cover featured the best known portrait of Eva Perón, painted by Numa Ayrinhac (Fig. 81).³⁶³ Students of all ages and levels, then, were forced to know this image, since the book would be variously used for all levels in the primary schools, as the single text for fifth and sixth grades, and in secondary and technical

schools for different courses ranging from literature to civics.³⁶⁴ Simultaneously, students and teachers would encounter effigies of Perón and Eva objects as mundane as labels for school materials (Fig. 82). Periodical publications of massive distribution also bore these portraits, with the result that readers of popular magazines such as *Mundo Deportivo*, *El Hogar*, *PBT*, and others, were bound to view them, in the course of reading about subjects of their interest (Fig. 83, Fig. 84, and Fig. 85). Persons of all kinds, furthermore, consumed portraits and slogans in public and popular events, such as sports championships, art salons, and competitions of all kinds. Organized and financed by the government, these events were voluntarily attended by Peronist and non-Peronist alike, who were attracted to the events themselves. In 1954 alone, 216,000 children attended the *Campeonatos Evita* [Evita Championships] and *Campeonatos Juveniles Deportivos Juan Perón* [Juan Perón Youth Sports Championships], where they were awarded prizes, cups, and mentions bearing the effigies of Perón and Eva Peron (Fig. 86).³⁶⁵

Everyday experience of Peronist propaganda would undoubtedly have provided Maldonado with elements to conceptualize the notion that a visual and verbal “chatter” (a term which he apparently borrowed from Karl Jaspers) had replaced real communication, i.e. qualitative dialogue, in society. The bombardment of repetitive Peronist images would have encouraged the artist to theorize that Concrete works of art needed to provide a wealth of new and unprecedented perceptions to be effective. In contrast with Concrete art, portraits of Perón and Eva Perón were not expected to provoke individualized or unexpected sensory or intellectual reactions. Instead, they were constructed as icons which seemingly bore no complexities or encoded meanings. Most portraits of Eva

Perón, for example, showed only her torso or head against a flat background, and little or no visual context was visible. Her face, upper body, and arms were flattened and color transitions were simplified. Portraits of Perón and Eva Perón invariably bore a somewhat stereotyped smile, alert eyes, and a sober hair style: their demeanor, in sum, embodied a mixture of optimism and dignity. Because of their simplicity, this limited repertoire of iconic portraits could be easily adapted and repeated in many different situations (posters, banners, stamps, magazine and book covers, key chains, busts, sports cups, plaques, and other memorabilia). Being easily readable, easily adaptable, and easily repeatable, the effigies of Perón and Eva Perón served to ‘mark’ a variety of spaces and situations—a demonstration, a home, a store, a reading assignment, a competition, or the affiliation of an individual—as unambiguously ‘Peronist.’ In doing so, they robbed each particular space and situation from complexity and density, because they reduced or altogether impeded the entrance of other possible connotations.

While in *Nueva Visión* Maldonado did not specifically comment on the mechanisms of Peronist mass propaganda, his observations about certain images of modern art suggest that he was well aware of how propaganda functioned. Issue no. 5, from 1954, included a commentary by Maldonado about the series *Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara* [Variations on the theme of a face] by the Bauhaus artist Xanti Schawinsky (Fig. 87, Fig. 88, Fig. 89, Fig. 90).³⁶⁶ This was a series of photomontages made out of a single photographic image of the face of the architect Walter Gropius. The photomontages distorted and fragmented the face and its parts in different ways. About Schawinsky’s approach to portraiture, Maldonado stated that:

The purpose in contemporary art, once again, is to disburden an image of its habitual meanings. On this occasion, the chosen image is a face, the face of Walter Gropius. Using photomontage as a process, Schawinsky disarticulates, breaks, and distorts, the image-face....Every culture has its face, its tics, its expressive commonplaces—in other words, its mask; but to every culture, there also comes the moment of its unmasking. Certain semantic catastrophes occur, even in the cultures that are surest of themselves, and in the least expected circumstances. Meanings are displaced. Some die, others drag themselves sickly, and later disappear. Schawinsky knows all of this. Even more: he perceives the free space that remains between the face and the mask, and he irrupts with humor and disconcerting artistic inventiveness.³⁶⁷

Maldonado was aware that if the “image-face” was shattered, in the manner which Schawinsky shattered and distorted a human face in his photomontages, new meanings and connotations could enter the image. Not only that: he defined this dismemberment as a form of cultural unmasking—a situation in which the entire culture that revered an image was affected. By distorting the face, Schawinsky made viewers aware that this face—this iconic presence—was indeed a representation. Maldonado applauded Schawinsky for introducing new meanings in the image and thus, for unmasking the fact that an iconic face was not a presence but a constructed representation.

Maldonado was also able to distort and shatter the basic compositional principle of propagandistic portraiture—the display of a single figure over the background—using the solid colors and pure lines of Concrete art. In *Una Forma y Series* [One shape and series], from ca. 1954 (Fig. 91), the artist used a tall and narrow canvas which recalled a frame adequate for a portrait. Against a clear, flat background, Maldonado painted a large irregular shape which visually functioned as a solid figure. Vertical and diagonal lines made a third visual plane. The ‘figure’, however, seemingly overflowed the limits of the

frame and thus, contradicted and distorted the usual figure-background relationship which viewers habitually see. The vertical and diagonal lines crossed over both the figure and the background, instead of finding a place on the figure or defining its borders. Just like Schawinsky's *Variations about a theme*, Maldonado's *Una forma y series* shattered the legibility and clarity of the traditional figure-background relationship, and new meanings could enter the image.

Maldonado's approach to the figure-background problem consisted in making the familiar, unfamiliar: he turned an otherwise intelligible image into an ambiguous one. This approach, indeed, was congruent with his belief that the art of his time was to provoke a sense of discovery in the spectator, to inspire the joy of invention, and to sensitize viewers to new perceptions and intellectual encounters. In "Problemas Actuales del la Comunicación," he wrote:

Ultimately, the explosive states, that is, the states of intense animation provoked by the advent of new images, may favor communicative life. Chatter works in the opposite direction. It reduces the probability of diversification and increases the probability of termination. Its objective is to eternize "unconscious archetypes" (Bachelard).³⁶⁸

The opposition that Maldonado made between "new images" and "unconscious archetypes" had its equivalent in the opposition he constructed between "communication" and "chatter." In his view, new images—those produced by the Concrete artists—fostered communication, while the constant repetition of images acted as a form of social chatter that denigrated culture and led to its impoverishment. In the 1950s, Maldonado's everyday experience of Peronist propaganda could have stimulated his characterization of Concrete art as a remedy for contemporary culture.

Madí architecture against Functionalism

Just as the Concrete artists reformulated their original interests towards science and visual communication in the 1950s, the Madí artists became progressively concerned with formulating the principles of “Madí architecture” during the same period. The first mention of a “Madí architecture” appeared in the Madí manifesto, a version of which was published in 1947 in the first issue of *Arte Madí Universal*.³⁶⁹ Here, this architecture was described as “space and mobile, movable forms.”³⁷⁰ In another text from 1947, Kosice proposed a kind of “housing which, based on the latest transformations, ends up by superceding in itself its static base and its usual functions (mobile articulated buildings that can be suspended in space).”³⁷¹ Thus, from as early as 1946, Kosice vaguely imagined a kind of housing that shared the characteristics of kinetic sculpture. It was not until 1954, however, that the artist extensively discussed for the first time the features and reasons of Madí architecture. This was the subject of an article entitled “Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición” [“Orthogonalism and new compositional relations”], published in the last issue of *Arte Madí Universal*.³⁷²

In “Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición,” Kosice critiqued the formal, conceptual, and psychological implications of a favorite tool of the International Style—the right angle—and he condemned the “orthogonal equilibrium” that the right angle provoked in architecture. He wrote that:

rhythm, orthogonal balance, its static nature, are specifically attached to contemplative confrontations. This causes the individual to accept his [or her] permanence in his [or her] place and time....

Definitely it is to remain in the [same] place—a habit rooted in the trace of a distance—and in the formal and psychological sense, it is to attach oneself, in this trace, to correspondences of structure-plane and structure-volume-verticality-horizontality in painting and sculpture respectively.

The architectural medium, which involves all the problems of aesthetic, theoretical, technical, and economic order, follows this same pre-established order.

It rests on scales that are unchangeable; the invention of the newest materials in construction has not been able to noticeably change static rhythms.

Even though the purposes of this architecture are based on enclosing spaces and not in raising walls, architecture struggles against the static mass: the floor and the wall are its most palpable inconvenience.³⁷³

Thus, Kosice translated some of the principles that characterized Madí painting and sculpture—the breaking of the rectangular frame—to architecture, arguing that the overuse of the right angle in architecture only rooted individuals to their known experiences: the right angle fostered their “permanence in time and place.” Kosice’s main targets were Walter Gropius, the “International Style,” and functional architecture which, in his opinion, had brought disastrous consequences for individuals:

What Gropius and “international architecture” have not been able to justify is the persistence of blocks of buildings that are raised with a few variations in their exterior, [this is] the passive register of cities in which people live clumped in reduced apartments, and in which the window, wanting to take over the façade, does not resolve the technical future of architecture.³⁷⁴

According to Kosice, then, the International Style, was forcing individuals to live trapped in rigid and uncreative spaces. The artist even deemed functional architecture as a kind of “building engineering”³⁷⁵ and proposed, instead, “the function of structures ‘for living’, liberated and mobile in space.”³⁷⁶ As opposed to functional architecture, these structures would use “the diagonal, the curve, and movement;”³⁷⁷ “the wall...mobile and transparent;”³⁷⁸ and space “as a base without limit and not the surface of the Earth as the single possible support.”³⁷⁹ He added that “housing [will] appear in its exterior and its

interior as a work of art....”³⁸⁰ He also stated that this form of architecture would facilitate “a more passionate and viable search in the conquest of the new.”³⁸¹ Kosice illustrated his article with an example of a Madí building he envisioned, entitled *Proyecto para una Construcción en Aeropuerto o Avenida de Buenos Aires* [Project for a construction in airport or avenue of Buenos Aires] (Fig. 92). He had exhibited this work the previous year at his one-person exhibition at Bonino Gallery in Buenos Aires.³⁸²

Kosice’s critique of the right angle was directed to the projects that Walter Gropius had exhibited at the II São Paulo Biennial in 1953. Yet it is also likely that “Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición” constituted a reaction to the boom in “building engineering” that the artist would have witnessed in the city of Buenos Aires. An aerial view of the cityscape of Buenos Aires photographed during this period, indeed, showed the city as remarkably orthogonal (Fig. 93). Tall, cubic buildings located close to one another and punctuated with rectangular windows and balconies predominated in the view. This, in fact, was the orthogonalism which Kosice would have experienced. Since the 1930s, certain forms of “modern” architecture had started to appear in Buenos Aires, throughout offices, hospitals, schools, and public housing. These 1930s constructions employed purified volumes and denoted functionalism and efficiency. An office building by Raúl Birabén and Ernesto Lacalle Alonso on Uruguay Street (Fig. 94), for example, boasted what architectural historian Jorge Francisco Liemur has called “radical functionalism.”³⁸³ The building was entirely deprived of superfluous decoration, with continuous windows integrated along the façade. Efficiency and sobriety were also the quest in the Churruca Hospital, by Antonio Vilar (Fig. 95), and in El Hogar

Obrero by Wladimiro Acosta and Fermín Bereterbide (Fig. 96). Standardizing the processes of physical healing, the Churruca hospital was a massive, self-contained structure with a façade pierced by lines of identical windows and a central entrance. Similarly, El Hogar Obrero efficiently maximized the ratio space-inhabitant while maintaining the minimum standards of fresh air and room privacy. These buildings were potentially repeatable on multiple occasions, and thus, the future inhabitant or client of these modern spaces was conceived as a depersonalized, collective member of society. On both occasions, the buildings' clean functionality came to be seen—per se—as modern architecture.³⁸⁴ Modernity and functionalism also came to characterize many government-sponsored architectural works of the 1930s. In the Ministry of Public Works, raised in 1937 (Fig. 97), symmetry and regularity were meant to evoke the efficiency and fairness of public service. Designed as a wide skyscraper, this building consisted of a solid, clearly defined cubic volume, with minimal decorative features. While the walls were pierced by abundant windows, the structure was opaque and it evoked permanence.³⁸⁵

A large portion of the architecture commissioned by the Peronist government—notably, many public housing projects—took over the functional formal vocabulary that had characterized the above-described trend since the 1930s. Many examples of public housing were raised as tall and regular pavilions, intended to house hundreds of people in apartments. The Pavilions on Acoyte and Ambrosetti Avenues, built between 1949 and 1952 (Fig. 98), were twelve and seven floors tall, and they were meant to house a total of 400 persons.³⁸⁶ The Monoblock General Belgrano, raised between 1949 and 1952 (Fig. 99), was a twelve-floor building with 131 apartments for 650 persons.³⁸⁷ In both cases, the

solid definition of the cubic volumes was maintained, and the only decorations were the balconies—the only connection with an outdoor space that these living situations permitted. These buildings, with their regularity, massiveness, symmetry, and general lack of decoration, came to characterize the cityscape of Buenos Aires during this period—and a large number of them were financed and raised by the Peronist government. Another aspect of the cityscape of Peronist times was the Ezeiza airport, finished in 1951 (Fig. 100. The main building (visible in Fig. 101) isolated in an open space and surrounded by platforms and runways, boasted a curtain wall that the state propaganda glamorized by photographing during the night with artificial light.³⁸⁸

Kosice, who lived in Buenos Aires at this time, undoubtedly would have been aware of the characteristics of this architecture and his article, “Orthogonalism and new compositional relations,” may well represent his reaction to the forms of living that this cityscape fostered. In this context, could it also be possible that Kosice’s *Proyecto para una Construcción en Aeropuerto o Avenida de Buenos Aires*—his first example of Madí architecture—was a direct response to a specific construction that Peronist government erected? In the title of the work, the mention of an “airport” may refer to any one of the two existing airports in Buenos Aires, both of which were built by the Peronist government. Aeroparque was finished in 1947 and Ezeiza in 1951. The title of Kosice’s work also referred to an unnamed “avenue.” While this reference may have indicated any of the many important avenues of Buenos Aires, it was on the one that led to Ezeiza, at the intersection of the two major avenues that urbanized the area—Avenida Ricchieri and Avenida General Paz—that the government had erected a complex of mass housing in the

rational and functional style that Kosice condemned. Kosice's *Proyecto para una Construcción en Aeropuerto o Avenida de Buenos Aires*, then, may have been a direct reference to the buildings at this housing complex: Barrio 17 de Octubre, built between 1950 and 1954 (Fig. 102).

Located fifteen kilometers from Ezeiza and along the Avenue that led to the airport, Barrio 17 de Octubre consisted of nine tall, block-like buildings that rose on virgin land in the outskirts of Buenos Aires. Six pavilions faced General Paz Avenue and three faced Ricchieri Avenue. There were 888 apartments in the buildings, and a total of 4252 had been projected. The projected population for this Barrio—named after the historic Peronist date of October 17th—was 32,000 people.³⁸⁹ Massive and regular, the buildings resembled an army of giants: an effect achieved not only by their volumetric definition but also by the fact that they were built parallel to each other. In the design of the apartments, the central preoccupation was the efficient use of space. Rooms were quadrangular and evenly sized throughout the floors. In such a conception, distinctly individualized quarters would have been impossible to incorporate in the structures.

Kosice's *Proyecto para una Construcción en Aeropuerto o Avenida de Buenos Aires* seemingly mocked this general arrangement. While its basic shape was a block-like tower with evenly divided floors, two giant circular shapes projected out and back into the tower. Along the orbits of these circles, forms shaped as rhomboids were attached. From an architectural point of view, the projecting circular shapes were completely non-functional and had a heroic and dynamic quality, while the building block (the useful part) was dwarfed by their majestic size. According to Juan Bay, who briefly addressed

this object in the preface of Kosice's one-person show at Bonino Gallery in 1953, the work was one of his "magnificent projects of architectural unity, [designed] to take to a monumental scale constructions for avenues, airports, or large open spaces."³⁹⁰ Kosice himself believed that these architectural projects would "bring to the habitat the same problems that concern the sculptor and the painter, without forgetting poetry that penetrates like a vital component the most evident potentialities of life."³⁹¹ From the pages of his marginal publication, *Arte Madí Universal*, the artist contended that Madí architecture would radically transform conscience and sensitize man to the new. The buildings raised by Peronist architectural policies—rationalist and functional as they were—would have provided the artist with ample material against which to conceptualize his ideas. Kosice's increasing interest in architecture during this period, then, may have been stimulated by his exposure to Peronist architecture, and *Proyecto para una Construcción en Aeropuerto of Avenida de Buenos Aires* provides a specific example of how this dialogue could have taken place.

The artists take part in the system: a reassessment

As I argued above, during the 1950s, the Concrete and the Madí artists articulated critical responses to their experience of Peronism from their artists' publications: *Nueva Visión* and *Arte Madí Universal*. However, it is noteworthy that, at the same time, they chose to participate in government-sponsored artistic events. Scholars Andrea Giunta and María Amalia García have pointed to specific interventions of the Concrete and the Madí artists in official exhibitions and events that were undoubtedly marked as Peronist. García

has studied the friendly relationship between some of the Concrete artists, primarily Tomás Maldonado, and the Peronist official Ignacio Pirovano. Pirovano was the director of the Museum of Decorative Arts during the Peronist period, and the President of the National Commission for Culture, in which Maldonado himself appears to have participated. Pirovano seemingly liked geometric and constructivist art, since he continued to collect it well after the Concrete artists had lost interest in it. In the 1960s and 70s, he was a close friend and supporter of the Generative artists, especially Eduardo McEntyre. García shows that in 1952 Pirovano commissioned Maldonado and other Concrete artists with the design of the poster for a major exhibition of the work of the Argentine artist Sesostris Vitullo. Held at the Museum of Modern Art in Paris, this exhibition was sponsored by the Argentine Embassy, and its hallmark would have been a sculpture representing Eva Perón (Fig. 103). Taken in conjunction with the Concrete artists' fluid relationship with Pirovano, their acceptance of such a commission suggests a softened attitude to Perón's regime, if not their support of Peronism.³⁹² Giunta detects the same softened attitude in the artists' decision to participate in two major government-organized exhibitions of the 1950s. During the 1940s the artists had never taken part in the most prestigious artistic circuits of professional validation: the annual national salons. In 1952, however, their works filled an important room at the National Fine Arts Museum on the occasion of the mega-exhibition "Argentine Painting and Sculpture from this century" (Fig. 104 and Fig. 105). Didactically organized, this exhibition was meant to survey the history of twentieth-century Argentine art by showing key works from different styles and historical periods. According to the catalog of the exhibition, the

Concrete artists Maldonado, Hlito, and Iommi contributed one work each, while the Madí artists Kosice and Aníbal Biedma were present with a total of three works.³⁹³ Besides the works of art included in the exhibition, full-figure portraits of Perón and of his wife Eva also hung on the walls of the National Museum and were reproduced in the catalog (Fig. 106). The distinctions between art and official sanction or political propaganda, thus, mixed and blended in the context of this exhibition. Giunta also argues that in 1953, the works of the Concrete, of the Madí, and of other Abstract artists actually became the representatives of “Argentine art” in an important international artistic forum, the São Paulo Biennial. The catalog of the Biennial shows that several Concrete artists (Girola, Iommi, Maldonado, and Prati), as well as Kosice, exhibited works. These works had been specifically selected for the Biennial as part of the official government submission that would represent Argentine art abroad. Giunta suggests that this event would have, to a certain extent, sanctioned the Concrete and Madí artists as the official artists of the regime.³⁹⁴

While, as Giunta and García convincingly argue, the Concrete and Madí artists were able to forgo their dissident attitude on these occasions, other evidence shows that the artists themselves did not look upon these interventions uncritically or with self-complacency. The journal *Arte Madí Universal*, for example, included only a passing mention of the exhibition “La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de este Siglo,” and neglected to mention that the Madí artists themselves had taken part in this show. In the section “Aquí Madí,” placed in the last few pages of issue 7/8, a single sentence read that “Juan Zocchi, director of the National museum [sic.] of Fine Arts and organizer of “Argentine

Painting and Sculpture from this Century” has taken this exhibition to Chile, Peru, and Ecuador.”³⁹⁵ Had the artists taken pride in participating in this show, the show itself would have merited a more significant comment—especially considering that important critics devoted tens of pages to review the event in newspapers and journals.³⁹⁶ That *Arte Madí Universal* contained only a hushed comment suggests that the Madí artists were not entirely comfortable with their participation in the show.

Regarding the São Paulo Biennial, *Arte Madí Universal* included a one-page long general review of the events. In it, the editor—presumably, Kosice himself—discussed why he disapproved of the selection of works that had been submitted to the biennial:

Our selection lacked unity: [the organizers] wanted to include unequal manifestations, and even though these exist in profusion and quality in our extensive artistic milieu, they do not deserve our total approval because of that. [The organizers] have weakened [the submission] to benefit its amplitude, including Post-Cubists, Expressionists, Surrealists, next to the Concrete, *Perceptista*, and Madí artists. Our position is naturally biased, and we believe that it would have been adequate to make a dividing line between a touristic submission and a true selection of non-figurative art. To organize is to limit.³⁹⁷

Even though Kosice acknowledged the group’s participation in the Brazilian event, he did not complacently celebrate the manner in which the Madí artists had been represented in it. He remained critical of the “touristic” concept which had prevailed in the organization of the official Argentine selection.

The Concrete artists displayed a similar reaction to the events at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes and the II São Paulo Biennial. *Nueva Visión* included absolutely no mention of “La Pintura y la Escultura Argentina de Este Siglo,” or of the role of the

Concrete artists in it. With respect to the Brazilian show, the only reference in *Nueva Visión* concerns the acquisition prize that the painter Alfredo Hlito had been awarded:

The jury of the Second Biennial of the Museum of Modern Art in São Paulo awarded an acquisition prize to one of the works exhibited by our secretary to the director, Alfredo Hlito.... This distinction, granted to an Argentine artist in an international exhibition attended by the artistic creators of largest influence and transcendence from almost every country in the world and of the most diverse aesthetic tendencies, constitutes for our country a reason for justified satisfaction.³⁹⁸

Hlito's intervention in the biennial was the single center of attention in this commentary, and there is no mention of other artists' participation or of the event itself. Significantly, it was not about a government-organized exhibition but about their independently-organized events that the artists chose to report. The fifth issue of *Nueva Visión* included a five-page long report with photographs (for example, Fig. 107) of three exhibitions of the "Grupo de Artistas Modernos," which included five Concrete artists and four independent ones. Thoroughly illustrated with views of all three exhibitions, the report was introduced with the following caption:

The "Group of Modern Artists," which gathers the Argentine painters and sculptors of most advanced aesthetic orientation has just exhibited at the "Museu de Arte Moderna" in Río de Janeiro and in the "Stedelijk Museum" in Amsterdam. In both places, the most qualified sectors of the public, of the artists, and of the critics have agreed to acknowledge the hierarchy of the exhibited works...an Argentine show abroad has never received . . . a warmer reception. This international recognition...proves the maturity reached by the most innovative trends of contemporary art in our country, in particular, by the abstract and concrete [ones], which are the dominant ones in the group.³⁹⁹

The Concrete artists, then, chose to celebrate their independently-organized shows rather than those which were organized by the government. Furthermore, it is significant that the catalogs of the two international shows that *Nueva Visión* referred to—at the

Museu de Arte Moderna in Río de Janeiro and at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam—were written by the critic Jorge Romero Brest. A champion of “the freedom of color and form,” Romero Brest had, since the first days of Peronist rule, positioned himself against the artistic policies of the regime. After the Altamira school closed in 1946, Romero Brest launched another front in the defense of modern art, from the journal *Ver y Estimar*, which he founded in April 1948. A year earlier, in March 1947, he had been fired from his teaching posts in the Colegio Nacional, the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes, and the Universidad Nacional de La Plata because of his political opposition to the government. As Giunta has argued, *Ver y Estimar* was the front from which Romero Brest articulated his “central offensive” against the artistic policies of Peronism.⁴⁰⁰ Criticizing the Salon of 1948, two of his so-called “disciples” stated that:

The National Salon has become an Argentine myth. . . .It is necessary to confront this myth and fight against it. It is necessary to avoid the ever-growing limitation of the public’s retina, an education in the midst of aesthetic poverty, the confusion of art and morality, and reactionary prejudices. It is necessary to save the freedom of color and form.⁴⁰¹

Through the 1950s, Romero Brest took under his wing the Abstract trends in general and the Argentine Concrete artists in particular. Like the Concrete artists, he envisioned Abstract and Concrete art as a moral remedy for contemporary culture, and he despised the climate of propaganda and repetition of images which he associated with vulgarity. The repeated support that the Concrete artists received from Romero Brest, as well as their shared opinion regarding the role of Concrete art in contemporary culture, suggests their mutual scorn for Peronist cultural policies.

Epilogue

A significant transition is evident when comparing the 1950s works of the Concrete and Madí artists with their works of the 1940s. In the 1950s the Argentine artists came to be greatly attracted to the problems of industrial design and of modern architecture. Scholars have argued that their new interests resulted from their encounters with European architects, artists, and designers, of which Max Bill and Walter Gropius were the most influential. Yet Maldonado's new perception of himself as a specialist in visual communication, and Kosice's mature conceptualization of "Madí architecture" also developed in the midst of the culture of Peronism. This culture permeated all Argentine spaces. On the one hand, icons of Peronism marked every situation and event as "Peronist;" on the other, rationalist and functionalist spaces came to be associated with the government's social projects. The Madí and Concrete artists experienced this culture of Peronism in an immediate manner, and this experience also affected their artistic production. The artists' transition towards architecture, design, and communication, then, needs to be understood as resulting from a plurality of reasons, of which their immediate experience of Peronism was a central one.

CHAPTER 6

Productive dialogues:

Concrete and Madí art, and Musical Ideas in Buenos Aires in the 1940s and 50s

Previous chapters in this dissertation focused on constructing dialogues between examples of Concrete and Madí production and various texts and objects which the artists may have encountered as part of the immediate experiences they lived in Buenos Aires in the 1940s. By doing this, my intention was to generate interpretations of Concrete and Madí production which attach this production to the place and time in which was created. Nevertheless, these chapters did not explain what, in fact, the actual artistic implications of Concrete and Madí art were. This is my intention here.

In order to illuminate the originality of Concrete and Madí aesthetic propositions, scholars have tended to directly compare them with better-known examples of earlier, contemporary, and later European and American art. Attempting to validate Concrete and Madí art before a public unfamiliar with Argentine art, some scholars have repeatedly argued about the originality of the Argentine expressions by stating, for example, that the Argentine cut-out frame pre-dated Frank Stella's shaped canvas by several years. While this is chronologically true, it is also largely irrelevant for the understanding of Concrete and Madí art, as Stella's shaped canvases were concerned with different problems and were historically unrelated with Concrete and Madí art. Comparisons such as these, indeed, only obscure the specific visual implications of the Argentine works.⁴⁰² While usually well-intentioned, the unfortunate result of this approach is that, invariably, the

Concrete and Madí productions appear as mere formalist derivations of their European and American counterparts. Following the underlying premise of this dissertation that Concrete and Madí productions need to be interpreted in relation to experiences the artists lived in an immediate manner, this chapter seeks to clarify the artistic implications of Concrete and Madí works by exploring the artists' dialogues with stimuli they encountered and to which they responded.

From 1943 and until the mid-1950s, Concrete and Madí artists developed and maintained contacts with various musicians living in Argentina and Brazil: Esteban Eitler, Juan Carlos Paz, Matilde Werbin, and Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, among others. These musicians practiced, composed, and promoted musical forms which experimented with atonalism, pure sound, serial music, and electronic musical instruments. As a result of these contacts, Madí and Concrete activities frequently included performances of twentieth-century music. Concrete and Madí artists also included statements about “inventionist music” and “Madí music” in *Revista de Arte Concreto* and *Arte Madí Universal*.⁴⁰³ Furthermore, Eitler, Paz, and Koellreutter contributed extensive articles and musical scripts to these publications—thus signaling their own allegiance to the general precepts of Concrete and Madí art.

The documented exchanges between the Concrete and Madí artists and the musicians Werbin, Eitler, Koellreutter, and Paz constitute a relevant theoretical corpus for the interpretation of Concrete and Madí art. These musical ideas can be used as a key to unravel the original aesthetic propositions made by the Argentine artists. With this

purpose, then, this chapter explores various dialogues that took place in the 1940s and 50s in Argentina, between musical ideas, and Concrete and Madí art.

Relations of equality: Werbin's music and Lozza's painting in 1946

The first publication of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Inventi3n—the group that gathered the Concrete artists in 1946 and 1947—included a one-page long article by the painter Raúl Lozza, entitled “Towards inventionist music.”⁴⁰⁴ In this article, Lozza referred to the musical experiments of one of the members of the Asociación, the composer Matilde Werbin, and defined the characteristics of her music as parallel to those proposed by inventionist art.⁴⁰⁵

Lozza explained that in inventionist music, the only valid musical element was sound, and that the only relations among individual sounds that inventionist music exploited were duration and intensity. With this approach, explained Lozza, inventionist music intended to leave behind all the music of the past. He stated that: “The new relations of sounds based on the valorization and objective perception of time and of sound vibrations bring as a consequence the invalidation of the musical phrase and the rejection of all problems related with chords.”⁴⁰⁶ Chords and musical phrases had characterized all the music of the past and of the present but, according to Lozza, neither in chords nor in musical phrases did the real unit of music—sound—emerge. He believed that even the advanced compositions of the present (“abstract athematism”), which no longer used traditional scales, continued to combine sounds to evoke expression. Inventionist composers, on the other hand,

understand musical creation as a motion of sound relations and not as a subdivision of musical phrases with their classic development. Inventionist music cannot be divided in parts by the musical phrase, for the latter will impose as a condition the priority of certain sounds. We are against the underestimation of a sound or a group of sounds and we advocate an elementarist parallelism. Every unraveling of a musical phrase imposes the acceptance of parts [of the composition] which are independent, and of parts which are derived. The structure of inventionist music will be based on a succession of sounds of parallel value. This new relationship, which is established only when the sonorous element is considered in its true value, has been the vital bone of the concrete musical invention.⁴⁰⁷

Lozza assumed that when sound, with its qualities of duration and intensity, became the single compositional element, each and every sound in a composition would become equally audible. An inventionist composition would be nothing but a given summation of sounds heard through time. Even silence, i.e., the absence of sound, was proscribed from inventionist music, since pauses between sounds led to subdivisions within a single composition, and thus, to the formation of audible phrases. In inventionist music, then, all sounds were equal—what Lozza called “elementarist parallelism.”⁴⁰⁸ Inventionist music, then, went against the idea that certain sounds or scales were superior to others, and that certain parts of a composition were more important than others. In inventionist music, the composer only aimed at producing and hearing individual sounds.

It is significant that Lozza published this article just as the Concrete artists were developing the concept and form of the *coplanal*, i.e., a kind of painting in which several separate, irregularly-shaped, colored planes were held together by connecting rods. In another article published in the same *Revista Arte Concreto*, Maldonado explained that the coplanal had been conceived in order to do away with the pictorial illusionism that continued to exist in the cut-out frames.⁴⁰⁹ One of the illustrations of Maldonado’s article,

in fact, was a drawing depicting an untitled coplanal by Lozza, from ca. 1946 (Fig. 108). Besides separating the planes to avoid the formation of illusory pictorial planes, Lozza's drawing intuitively sought to nullify any sort of illusionism on the basis of a relationship between the intensity of color, the size of the colored surface, and the direction of the predominant lines of the cut-out planes. This *coplanal* consisted of three irregular shapes: a very large one placed in the middle, a relatively smaller triangular shape placed on the right, and a smaller polygon placed on the left. While the reproduction printed in *Revista de Arte Concreto* is monochrome, it is possible to perceive that the larger irregular shape in the *coplanal* bears a less intense hue, while the value of the two smaller shapes is darker and more saturated. According to his supporter Abraham Haber, in this *coplanal* from 1946 Lozza had intuitively sought to create a completely flat surface by counterbalancing the effects of color, size, and direction of the planes.⁴¹⁰ With a less saturated color, then, corresponded a larger surface, whereas a smaller surface would be counterbalanced with a more intense hue. Lozza believed that, with this method, it would be possible to leave behind pictorial illusion, since a surface in which all tensions had been suspended could not, in his view, suggest the illusion of three dimensions.

Considering that Matilde Werbin was developing the characteristics of inventionist music at the same time that Concrete artists such as Maldonado, Lozza, and Molenberg were defining the Concrete *coplanal*, it would not be surprising that there existed resonances between the pictorial and the musical forms. In his article about Werbin's music, Lozza explained that all sounds were conceived as equal, and that duration in time and intensity determined the structure of her compositions. In turn,

Lozza's own *coplanals* were structured according to a relationship of two variables: color intensity and size. While the shapes varied in size and the colors varied in intensity, Lozza believed that the summation of all shapes and all colors generated a surface without alterations: a flat surface. Pictorial flatness, thus, could be an analogy of sound equality, because, according to Lozza, for a pictorial surface to be flat, all elements needed to nullify, i.e., equalize one another.

Concrete *coplanals*, then, proposed equilibrium among the elements of the plane, and this equilibrium intended to have the visual effect of nullifying illusionism. Meanwhile, inventionist music regarded all sounds as equal, as it intended to nullify all categorization among the sounds. This analogy between the equilibrium among the parts of the plane and the equality of sounds, in turn, had its social resonance in the political ideals of the Concrete artists, who advocated the imminent arrival of a Communist revolution that would bring social equality and liberation.

Irregular vibrations: Eitler's music, Madí drawing, and the cut-out frame

During the 1940s, the Madí group found an active collaborator in the musician Esteban Eitler. Born in 1913 in Bozen, Tirol (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), Eitler had studied in Budapest and had been flutist at the city's symphonic orchestra. In 1936, he moved to Buenos Aires, fleeing from the climate of Nazi persecution that reigned in Hungary. In Buenos Aires, he participated in various local orchestras and in 1941, he began to compose and organize concerts of avant-garde music and other activities with his colleague, the Argentine musician Juan Carlos Paz. These concerts

usually took place at the Teatro del Pueblo, founded by Leónidas Barletta.⁴¹¹ Eitler was also a member of the Madí group. He took part in the concert at the legendary 1945 exhibition at Grete Stern's house in Ramos Mejía; he played in the concert included in the first Madí exhibition at the Instituto Francés de Estudios Superiores in 1946, where the Madí manifesto was read; and he participated in the concert at the Teatro del Pueblo in 1948.⁴¹² He also contributed musical scores to the first three issues of *Arte Madí Universal*, published between 1947 and 1949.⁴¹³ Upon moving to Santiago, Chile, in 1950, Eitler joined the composer Free Fock in founding the important group Tonus—an endeavor which would be central to the promotion and development of twentieth-century music in Chile.⁴¹⁴ From this country, Eitler kept in touch with Kosice and continued to make contributions to *Arte Madí Universal*. Each journal issue from 1951 until 1954 included news about Eitler's musical activities in Chile and Brazil, as well as reproductions of his "Madí drawings."⁴¹⁵

It is significant that Eitler's first drawing to appear in *Arte Madí Universal* shared the same page with one of his musical compositions—*Preludio de las cuatro bagatelas*, for violin, cello, and piano (illustrated separately in Fig. 109 and Fig. 110).⁴¹⁶ This score was dated June 14th, 1947, and the untitled drawing would have dated to ca. 1948. The temporal proximity in the creation of the pieces, as well as their physical proximity on the journal page, suggests that they may be related and, indeed, a close analysis of both works—the score and the drawing—easily reveals many analogies. *Preludio de las cuatro bagatelas* displays an intentional dismissal of traditional musical structure, as it is not symmetrically organized. Instead, a single phrase provides a climax towards the end of

the piece, with the same melody played simultaneously in the violin and the cello. This work, furthermore, conspicuously boasts the rejection of Baroque and Classic music principles, as it lacks a tonal center. It is also played at a slow pace, thus avoiding the regularity of a strongly marked rhythm, and evoking disjunction. The musical texture is very thin: for most of the prelude's duration, only one instrument is heard while the other two remain silent or provide accompaniment with one occasional note. The work also rejects past musical traditions by avoiding a significant amount of counterpoint—i.e., music in which one hears two or more distinct musical lines at the same time: the work, in fact, moves through non-repetitive clusters of sound and avoids flowing melodies. Finally, *Preludio de las cuatro bagatelas* uses dissonance. A cluster of simultaneous dissonant sounds, with intervals of a seventh in notes C to B above, is played on the piano in measures 11 and 12. Insistently played three consecutive times, these sounds remain incomplete and unresolved.⁴¹⁷ The work, thus, impresses as missing a consistent structure, and it displays dissonance and irregularity.

Eitler's 1948 untitled drawing (Fig. 110) gives the same impression of incompleteness and disjunction. The drawing seemingly contains three adjacent planes, but the contours of these planes are not defined by real lines. The internal lines stop abruptly defining a fictitious line. The three virtual planes, in turn, contain intersecting and parallel straight lines, but none of these lines form closed shapes such as triangles, rectangles, squares, or polygons. Though a few lines meet at an angle, most lines only suggest fictitious angles as their ends approach. The general impression of the drawing, then, is one of interruption, disjunction, and absence. The drawing also evokes musical

concepts in other ways. Most of the parallel lines are thin, but they reinforce their visual impact by appearing close together. This recalls how musical sounds are organized. Musical notes are individual units that achieve auditory prominence by ‘piling up’, i.e., by sounding simultaneously. In Eitler’s drawing, indeed, lines also ‘pile up’ since the parallels are arranged very close together. This results in the formation of line clusters even though each line maintains its singularity. Piled up, the thin parallel lines also suggest vibration, and the interruptions in the flow of the lines also suggest changes in musical texture. Furthermore, these interruptions evoke dissonance, since figures cannot be completed, just as dissonant sounds do not find their completion in consonance. In some areas of the drawing, however, Eitler also evokes the effects of continuous sound vibrations, as displayed in his prelude. In the drawing, the traces of a few lines begin very close to where other parallel lines end. This suggests the musical effect of a sound that does not stop vibrating until another sound has begun to vibrate. Within the clusters of parallels, then, Eitler evokes the notion that a sound may have an extended duration.

Just as the organization of Eitler’s untitled drawing from ca. 1948 has analogies with the organization of his music, as analyzed in *Preludio de las cuatro bagatelas*, the drawing’s appearance also presents a striking similarity to many of the cut-out frames painted by other Madí artists. As shown in the 1948 photograph of the Madí exhibit at the Parisian *Salón de Realités Nouvelles* (Fig. 111), Madí artists constructed cut-out frames that followed various different structures and compositional techniques. Some artists, for example, applied paint inside the irregular canvas and framed their works within a thick black or white line. Other artists painted patterns on the irregular frame itself and left a

void of real space inside the frame. Yet regardless of where they actually applied paint, all artists used clashing hues and values. The lack of harmony in the colors and values used, and the fact that there was hardly any repetition of shapes within any single work, made it difficult for the viewer to recognize shapes that resembled forms of the natural world. The works, thus, were perceived only as irregular designs.

Unlike the Madí cut-out frames, Eitler 1948 untitled drawing did not use color or closed shapes. (This drawing, indeed, strictly followed the precept established in the Madí manifesto of 1946, that “Madí drawing is an arrangement of points and lines on a surface.”⁴¹⁸) Nevertheless, Eitler’s drawing was capable of evoking, just with lines on a surface, the effects of Madí paintings. Without the effects of contrasting colors, the lines in his drawing generate virtual irregular shapes even though the lines do **not** meet: thus, just as the colors clash in the cut-out framed paintings, so do the lines in Eitler’s drawing. Furthermore, the parallel clusters of lines seemingly mimic colors of higher and lower saturation: the areas of the drawing where lines are closer together appear as more intense and vibrant, while the areas where lines are spaced out appear as less intense. Finally, the awkward relationship between Eitler’s drawing and its support recalls the uneasy relation of cut-out framed paintings and their surroundings. Observed collectively and in situ as in the display at the Salon de Realités Nouvelles, the works have an ambivalent relationship with the rectangular wall. Because their shapes are not quadrangular, the cut-out frames do not echo the shape of the wall and thus do not fulfill the viewer’s expectations of how a painting looks. Yet they do not function as three-dimensional objects either, precisely because they are hung against the wall. This ambivalent relationship with the wall is of

course fully purposeful, since it contributes to call into question the role of paintings as representations. Eitler's drawing, in turn, also has an ambivalent relationship with its support: the drawing vaguely lays on the blank page, below the music score, and it appears to be neither fully separated from the blank expanse of the paper nor truly integrated with it. Merely with incomplete lines, then, Eitler's drawing evoked the ambiguous effects of the cut-out frames.

According to this reading, then, Eitler's untitled drawing from ca. 1948 simultaneously took part in two independent discourses: Eitler's own music, and the principles of the Madí cut-out frame. This is not at all surprising, since Madí artists regarded their creations as singular manifestations that, though constructed in independent media—painting, sculpture, poetry, music, architecture, and others—embodied, each in its own particular manner, the overarching Madí belief that all artistic forms needed to be absolute inventions. No Madí painting, musical piece, or drawing could be imitative of either nature or of the art of the past. And, by the same token, irregularity—an irregular frame, an irregular and incomplete drawing, and an irregularly-organized musical piece—could simultaneously evoke the artists' escape from both visual naturalism and past musical traditions.

Order as liberation: Koellreuter's "pan-intervallar scale" and Madí painting in the 1950s

Around 1949, Kosice established a contact with a second avant-garde musician, Hans- Joachim Koellreutter, who then lived in Brazil and was visiting Buenos Aires. As a

student in Berlin in 1935, Koellreutter had been introduced to atonalism, to twelve-tone music, and to other music currents of that time, by the director Hermann Scherchen. At this time, he became a well-known flutist and began making tours throughout Europe. In 1937, one tour took him to Brazil, where the outbreak of the Second World War surprised him in 1939. Refusing to enlist, he became a deserter and his German citizenship was soon revoked. In Brazil, he lived alternatively in São Paulo and Río de Janeiro and, in 1939 he created the movement and journal *Música Viva*, which performed compositions by Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schönberg, Bela Bartok, and others, for the first time in that country.⁴¹⁹

Kosice's relationship with Koellreutter appears to have started in the course of a series of lectures that the musician gave in Buenos Aires in 1949 or 1950: one at the Teatro del Pueblo, another at the auditorium of architect Raúl Birabén, and a third at the Instituto de Arte Moderno.⁴²⁰ On the occasion of Koellreutter's visit, Kosice seemingly voiced his concerns about recent musical developments. In an article entitled "Carta Abierta" ["Open Letter"] and published in *Arte Madí Universal* in 1950, Koellreutter referred to Kosice's

severe and implacable criticism to our music, twelve-tone music, which [Kosice] wishes liberated from any old form of conception and composition, reintegrated to its function of autonomous and humanizing art, since invention is the most important quality inherent to man. What your audacious and heroic group idealizes and intends to realize in its works, the INTEGRAL INVENTION of the work of art: this is what I also think is the basis for a new reality in art. Since the majority of twelve-tone composers, with the excuse of "consolidation" and "tradition," tried to return music to forms and norms that characterize the art of the past, and thus assumed an attitude of negative reaction against the Schönbergerian revolution, I became seriously worried about this problem.⁴²¹

Kosice, then, had seemingly attacked musicians who, in his view, were corrupting Arnold Schönberg's musical revolution. In 1924, this German composer had invented a system of composition that replaced tonality, the system which had dominated musical composition since the 1600s. Tonality was a system to which virtually all composers subscribed in the 18th and 19th century, despite their differences in style. The central elements of a tonality were, first, a fundamental tone (the key); second, the major and minor scales based on that key; and, finally, the consonant and dissonant chords built upon the same key. The major and minor scales, as well as the consonant and dissonant chords, constituted accepted and established ways of organizing sounds. While all composers deviated from these established conventions to some extent, the fundamental principles of tonality went unchallenged. Yet in the early 1920s, Schönberg's compositions substituted tonality with a system that employed all twelve half-tones of the chromatic scale (all major and minor keys). His melodies first stated a row of twelve tones (the prime row in the composition) and then proceeded to present systematically organized variations of this row: retrograde, inversion, retrograde inversion, and the same variations of these four rows. With his twelve-tone system, Schönberg demonstrated, first, that tonality was not the only system to organize musical compositions and, secondly, he did away with the notion that certain organizations of sounds were superior to others.⁴²² Nevertheless, as music historian Bryan Simms explains, many musicians who composed with Schönberg's twelve-tone method still refrained from exploring the most daring possibilities that this method allowed. This was indeed possible for the following reason: though Schönberg's method guaranteed that all sounds in a row of twelve tones

were heard, it specified no rules about how the intervals between these sounds would be structured. Therefore, when composing with twelve sounds only, composers could still generate intervals and even whole sequences of sounds which recalled the traditional scales.⁴²³ This would have caused listeners to recognize known whole sequences of sounds within the twelve-tone rows, instead of leading them to the constant awareness of original combinations of sounds. Thus, while these new compositions used the twelve-tone method, they would still sound more traditional and familiar to listeners.

To a large extent, this process was equivalent to the mixture of representation and abstraction in painting, as practiced by many artists, who continued to represent scenes of the visible world even though these scenes were geometricized and reinvented. Even though the Concrete and *Madí* artists acknowledged that in the early twentieth century Cubism, Futurism, Abstraction, and Surrealism had questioned the assumptions of naturalistic representation and objective vision, they despised the hundreds of contemporary artists who continued to work in these manners both in Argentina and abroad. In a review of an exhibition of the painter Gina Ionescu, for example, *Arte Madí Universal* commented that “her inventive force, her joyous color, were in part diluted by willingly uncontrolled stylistic interferences. The mingling of a Neo-Cubism and of an “abstracted” representation took away unity from her show.”⁴²⁴ For Kosice, a supporter of new realities beyond any imitative purpose, this aspect of Ionescu’s work was inadmissible. His critique of artists who mixed tradition and innovation would have extended to any musical form that operated on equivalent principles.

Upon Kosice's complaints, Koellreutter seemingly took up the challenge to invent, for music, the equivalent of Kosice's words: "we don't seek a resemblance with anything."⁴²⁵ He thus proposed that, in addition to the twelve sounds of Schönberg's row, the eleven intervals that could occur between those sounds needed to be controlled. He experimented with a "pan-intervallar" scale, i.e., a scale in which every interval was different from the others and did not repeat. Koellreuter even consulted a Brazilian mathematician, Omar Catunda, who came up with a mathematical equation to calculate all the possible rows.⁴²⁶ If musicians used a pan-intervallar scale, Koellreutter explained, music would have achieved the point which Kosice demanded for the visual arts: "a free art as an expression of order and law."⁴²⁷ In other words, for Koellreutter, music would be free and fully independent from tradition only if new rules were created ad hoc and consistently used: following these rules, indeed, would monitor that the new music remained free from tradition.

Koellreutter's development of the pan-intervallar scale, which implied a set of strict rules to govern the creation of music, operated on similar premises as strategies that Kosice explored in some of his paintings of the 1950s—strategies which led him to organize Madí paintings according to certain rules. Two such paintings, *Planos y Color Liberados* [Liberated Planes and Color], from ca. 1950 (Fig. 112) and *Ecuación de Tres Planos Blancos* [Equation of Three White Planes], from ca. 1951 (Fig. 113) were respectively illustrated in the fourth and fifth issues of *Arte Madí Universal* and exhibited in group shows during this period.⁴²⁸ Both paintings consisted of independent planes attached to each other by curved, thin, metal rods. These 1950s works were relatives of

the Madí cut-out frames, coplanals, and articulated paintings, yet they departed from the latter forms in one significant way: the rods that linked the irregular planes were no longer conceived as functional parts of the objects. Instead, the rods in *Planos y Color Liberados* and *Ecuación de Tres Planos Blancos* followed the predominant forms displayed in the paintings (curves). This approach differed significantly from that displayed in the Concrete *coplanals* and in the Madí articulated paintings. In the Concrete *coplanal* (e.g. Fig. 51), the rods simply were fixed, straight sticks. These rods had the purpose of maintaining the independent portions of the coplanal physically attached, yet visually apart: in this way, the Concrete artists meant to avoid the visual formation of representational figures. In the Madí articulated paintings (e.g., Fig. 20), the rods not only connected the physically separate pictorial planes: they also allowed these planes to be moved. By way of these articulating rods, the viewer could change the position of the planes that made up the work. Yet the articulated paintings would have presented a new problem: because the rods allowed the planes to be moved, they also allowed the viewer to induce representational figures into the work. That these paintings could be articulated, then, had a double edge: on the one hand, the possibility of movement disrupted the planes' stability and legibility; on the other hand, the possibility of moving the planes could potentially provoke new representations. In the hands of an artist or viewer less radical than Kosice, then, articulated paintings could potentially lead back to fantasy, dream, and representation.

Since Kosice was adamant about creating an “essential” art⁴²⁹—i.e., an art fully and completely divorced from any degree of representation—it is not surprising that in *Planos*

y *Color Liberados* and *Ecuación de Tres Planos Blancos*, the connecting rods are solidly attached and did not allow movement. The paintings, thus, always kept the same appearance—the appearance originally dictated by the artist—, and this allowed him to fully control their non-representational look. More importantly, in these 1950s works, the shape of the connecting rods followed the general curved shape of the works. These paintings, thus, entirely followed their own ad hoc rules—those rules dictated by their own design—and these rules contributed to avoid any possibility of them becoming representations. With *Planos y Color Liberados* and *Ecuación de Tres Planos Blancos*, then, Kosice seemingly relinquished the notion that allowing freedom to the spectator would contribute to avoid representation. In these paintings, he would achieve “liberation” from naturalistic representation by structuring and ordering form.

The artist’s attitude towards painting resonates with the problem that seemingly troubled him regarding the development of modern music. Upon Kosice’s complaints, Koellreutter designed the pan-intervallar system to regulate the creation of music, believing that these regulations would maintain modern musical creations ‘free’ from tradition. Simultaneously, Kosice also created *Planos y Color Liberados* and *Ecuación de Tres Planos Blancos*, with the provision that the fixed connecting rods would systematically follow the general shape of the work, thus systematically liberating the planes from representation.

Ode to the new: new sounds and Madí sculpture

Two years after his first contribution to *Arte Madí Universal*, Koellreutter published a new article in the journal, entitled “Un nuevo mundo sonoro: carta a un joven músico” [“A new world of sounds: letter to a young musician”].⁴³⁰ Here, he explained his fascination with the new sounds and instruments he had seen and heard while visiting Europe in the early 1950s. In this text, he also celebrated the notion of invention and novelty in art, and made direct connections between the new sound revolution and an art of total invention. Thus, he claimed that:

Creating implies inventing something that did not exist before. A work of art, besides being valuable, must present something new, be of its own kind, and possess a style that will distinguish it from the creations of the past. Mainly, it must indicate the road to the future. This is the only criterion in the arts, which must be above the concepts of beauty and ugliness, concepts that are relative and somewhat debatable.

Art, dear friend, just like all social life, evolves and renews itself constantly and never goes back. Figurative art definitely belongs to the past and it does not advance the war for atonalism, twelve-tone music, or non-thematic music.⁴³¹

Koellreutter continued to describe, with great excitement, exactly what he had just seen in Europe. He especially referred to new instruments which could produce sounds that had never been heard before, and other electronic devices which could, by means of recording and reproduction, turn familiar noises into unfamiliar musical sounds. He explained that:

In 1948, thanks to the open-minded vision of French Radio Broadcast [Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (RTF)], [the musician Pierre] Schaeffer and a group of collaborators carried out a series of manipulations with recorded sound, and they were able to obtain musical elements from this noise. Meanwhile, at the University of Bonn in Germany, the scientist Dr. Meyer-Epple achieved similar results improving electronic instruments. The “Concert of Noises” in Paris in the same year, made history. Then came the first compositions: “Suite 14,” “Symphony for a lonely man” [“Symphonie pour un homme seul”], “Concert of

ambiguities,” “Music without title” by Henry Schaeffer; “Studies about a sound,” by Pierre Henry and others. Using every imaginable sound effect and musical instruments such as Trautonium, Ondes Martenot, Vodcek and others, these composers combine the usual expressive methods with new methods—shredding, filtering, ultrahigh, ultralow, and others.

It is hard to describe what I felt as I witnessed these experiences that will revolutionize the musical world. Everything that surrounds us—noises, words, sounds, sound effects of all kinds produced by new electronic instruments, is useful in the synthetic construction of musical works.⁴³²

Indeed, since the 1930s and through the 1940s, new musical instruments and electronic devices had opened up a whole new repertoire of sounds which broadened those provided by traditional musical instruments. On the one hand, these electronic instruments had made musicians wholly aware of the existence of sounds prevalent in the music of other cultures. The Trautonium and the Ondes Martenot mentioned by Koellreutter, for example, were invented in the late 1920s and were designed to reproduce the microtonal sounds found in Hindu music—sounds to which Western music had been largely unreceptive until then. Furthermore, in the 1940s, composers such as Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry started experimenting with recording devices, and these experiences made them aware that any sound could be recorded in its raw form and then manipulated to create musical compositions. Recording noises, altering them, and organizing them into compositions became the trend known as *Musique Concrète*. These new developments in electronic music, then, led to experimentation and invention.⁴³³

Already in 1951, Kosice had expressed his support for Koellreutter’s active interest in the newest musical instruments. In the section “Aquí Madí,” published in issue no. 5 of *Arte Madí Universal*, the artist commended the “incalculable interest” of the music that Koellreutter was being exposed to during his European visit.⁴³⁴ In the same journal issue, Kosice published a photograph of a sculpture which may dialogue with

both artist and musician's fascination with new discoveries—both musical and visual. *Estudio para una profundidad en perforación* [Study about depth by perforation], from ca. 1951 (Fig. 114) consisted of a bent metal sheet in the shape of a Moebius strip: a metaphor of endlessness and scientific discovery. Kosice would have been familiar with the shape of the Moebius strip and its connotations through Max Bill's famous sculpture, *Tripartite Unity*, from 1947-48 (Fig. 115), which had won the First Prize for Sculpture at the I São Paulo Biennial in 1951. Though Kosice did not attend the Biennial, an entry in the 1951 issue of *Arte Madí Universal* states that he had received the "catalog of Max Bill's latest exhibition" at the Museum of Modern Art in São Paulo.⁴³⁵ Bill and Kosice, in fact, had known about each other since 1949 at least, when they exchanged a series of personal letters and even discussed the possibility of organizing an international congress of non-figurative artists in South America.⁴³⁶

Kosice's version of the Moebius strip, in any case, not only connoted scientific discovery but also suggested musical and visual transformations. The work used a sonorous material for a sculpture: a perforated metal sheet that could potentially generate sound vibrations. The sheet could be bounced against a surface, and its shattering movements would produce sounds. The vibrations produced by the metal sheet, however, would have been mere noises until Kosice interpreted them as sounds—just like the new musicians mentioned by Koellreutter paid attention to ordinary noises and, by recording them electronically, turned them into sounds. *Estudio para una profundidad en perforación*, furthermore, conjured a visual metaphor. This title of the work and the multiple views of "depth" it allowed, indeed, would have challenged the notion that a

single point of view must structure the vision of depth. Just like the new sounds which Koellreutter discussed in his article opened up unexpected musical possibilities, the multiple and simultaneous views of spatial depth generated by Kosice's sculpture could open up unexpected visual possibilities: new, multiple, and simultaneous visions of deep space. *Estudio sobre una profundidad en perforación*, then, intertwined the musical and visual transformations of the 1950s. Kosice's exchanges with Koellreutter would have been a fruitful breeding ground for the experiments and discoveries of both artist and musician.

Challenging conventions: Non-thematic and microtonal music, and Concrete art

Just as *Arte Madí Universal* documented a fruitful discussion between Kosice and the musician Hans-Joachim Koellreutter in the early 1950s, the journal *Nueva Visión* also recorded exchanges between Tomás Maldonado and the Argentine musician Juan Carlos Paz. A composer, music teacher, critic, and writer, Paz had introduced Arnold Schönberg's twelve-tone music to Argentina in 1934. In 1937, he founded "Conciertos de la Nueva Música" ["Concerts of the New Music"]. These concerts provided an anthology of musical works by Schönberg, Anton Webern, Alban Berg, Ernst Krenek, Henry Cowell, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luigi Nono, Bruno Maderna, Luciano Berio, and Pierre Boulez. Around this time, Paz also began publishing extended articles on twentieth-century music in cultural journals such as *Sur*, *Cabalgata*, and *Contrapunto*.⁴³⁷ In 1950, the Concerts of the New Music grew into the Agrupación Nueva Música, a formal institution devoted to promoting the most advanced musical trends.⁴³⁸ To the journal

Nueva Visión, which Maldonado directed, Paz contributed important articles: the polemical text “Qué es nueva música?” [“What is new music?”] published in December 1951, and the more analytical “Música atemática y música microtonal” [“Non-thematic and microtonal music”] in issue 2/3 from January 1953.⁴³⁹ Furthermore, according to *Nueva Visión*’s former secretary, Carlos Mendes Mosquera, Paz and other musicians from the Agrupación Nueva Música frequently gave concerts for the Concrete artists and architecture students at Maldonado’s studio, located at Cerrito 1371 in Buenos Aires.⁴⁴⁰

Undoubtedly, then, in the early 1950s Paz would have been discussing “the new music” with the proponents of “the new vision.” In “Música atemática y música microtonal,” published in *Nueva Visión* in January 1953, Paz explained how non-thematic music, as developed by Czech composer Alois Haba, was one of the logical consequences of Schönberg’s twelve-tone music. The term “non-thematic,” explained Paz, “originates with and challenges the old definition of thematic work, where the theme, motif, or exposed melodic phase reappears in the course of a composition.”⁴⁴¹ Conversely, “Non-thematic” meant a style that lacked “reprises, sequences, correspondences, and any sort of thematic and melodic repetition.”⁴⁴² Paz noted, however, that while Haba’s style did away with melodic sequences, he continued to use rhythmic sequences, which became the structure of his compositions.⁴⁴³ Another of Haba’s achievements, Paz explained, was “microtonal music.” This music used sounds which composers produced by dividing the semitone into its intermediary sounds: fourths, sixths, eighths, tenths of tone, and so forth. These divisions were “the point of departure

of an unknown universe of sounds” since they implied the extension of what is known as “the natural scale.” Paz commented that:

We all know that this scale, which is the basis of all of our [Western] educated music and most of our popular music from the Renaissance to now, is as conventional as any musical value....The only thing that justifies this scale is that it is based on the auditory perception of those who established it and of those who then accepted it and grew used to it.⁴⁴⁴

This so-called natural scale, Paz contended, “does not exclude the possibility of new scales...”⁴⁴⁵ In sum, the “natural scale” was not natural but a mere convention.

One work by Maldonado which may have been in dialogue with Paz’s ideas was *Desarrollo de 14 temas* [Development of 14 themes] (Fig. 116), painted around 1951-52, and reproduced in issue *Nueva Visión* in 1953. The work was also included in the exhibition “La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de este Siglo” and at the group show of *Artistas Modernos de la Argentina* in Galería Viau in 1952.⁴⁴⁶ Together with all of the Argentine Concrete works of the early 1950s, this painting is generally perceived as a simple visual expression of the artists’ admiration for the European representatives of Concrete Art, especially Max Bill.⁴⁴⁷ Maldonado had met Bill during his first European visit in 1948 and had found his principle of “the good form” extremely compelling. Furthermore, the artist probably knew Bill’s series *Fifteen Variations on the Same Theme*, painted between 1935 and 1938. In his 1955 book on Max Bill, Maldonado stated that in this series, Bill explored the concept of variation, not as limited change within a pattern but as an “infinite multiplicity of possibilities” given by a limited repertoire of forms. Therefore, it is likely that *Desarrollo de 14 temas* dialogues with Bill’s aesthetic principles.

On the other hand, Paz's ideas also provide likely parameters for interpreting this work, since Maldonado may have found in the concept of non-thematic music a stimulating source to reformulate his central preoccupation since the 1940s: how to avoid representation.⁴⁴⁸ While in the irregular frames and *coplanals* of the 1940s, the Concrete artists had sought to avoid representation by disrupting the shape of the pictorial plane, in *Development of 14 themes* Maldonado avoided representation by disrupting the legibility of the work as a coherent unit. To become a representation, an image must not only evoke the natural world: it must also be legible as a structure, as a composition. Painting and music both achieve legibility through the repetition of forms, i.e., through symmetry, balance, and consistent variation. If all compositional patterns are suppressed, legibility is not possible, and neither is representation. Thus, just as non-thematic music could avoid "a theme" by lacking "reprises, sequences, correspondences, and any sort of thematic and melodic repetition," so could Concrete art avoid representation by not repeating clusters of pictorial elements—"themes"—within a single work. *Desarrollo de 14 temas*, in fact, avoided repetition by depicting irregular polygons instead of rectangles or squares, and diagonal lines instead of horizontal or vertical lines. The internal angles that these polygonal planes and diagonal lines create are all unequal, and the overall arrangement of the lines and planes within the pictorial frame is asymmetrical. The lines and planes, then, neither generate repetitive relations throughout the composition nor echo the rectangular shape of the frame. While Maldonado sustains a minimal degree of rhythm by using a limited repertoire of forms (straight lines and quadrangular planes), he reduces the work's legibility by avoiding repetitive combinations of these elements throughout

the canvas. Thus, he avoids representation by disrupting the possibility of an ordered reading of the painting.

The idea that a natural musical scale is a mere convention, and that this convention can be challenged by splitting known sounds may also have sparked pictorial strategies in *Desarrollo de 14 temas*. The painting, in fact, questions the conventional role of lines in two-dimensional media. Traditionally, lines serve to define figures. In drawing, they are purposefully visible elements that separate the figures from the background. In painting, they are imaginary barriers that separate extensions of color. In *Desarrollo de 14 temas*, however, the lines perform none of these functions. Rather than forming closed figures, several lines meet and explicitly describe wide angles, while others merely suggest angles. Maldonado also places lines around the edges of the polygonal planes, but these lines do not coincide with the edges of the planes that they seem to define. Maldonado, then, highlights the fact that outlined figures are illusory conventions and, therefore, that representation is merely a visual fabrication.

Both Maldonado and Paz sought to avoid representation—either musical or pictorial—by disturbing the principle of repetition and the conventions of visual and auditory perception. In each of their respective fields, they found analogous concepts to represent their antagonism to traditional artistic forms. Perhaps the most suggestive aspect of Maldonado’s dialogue with Paz is his title for this painting: *Desarrollo de 14 temas*. The fourteen themes are probably different combinations of pictorial elements that do not consistently repeat each other and thus, ironically, do not emerge coherently as “a theme”—evoking the process behind non-thematic music. The term “development” gives

the title a temporal quality that parallels the constant change of non-thematic music—what Paz calls “a perpetual development of musical discourse.”⁴⁴⁹ With its non-repetitive disposition of lines and planes, *Desarrollo de 14 temas* evokes constant change.

The concepts of non-thematic and microtonal music provide an alternative conceptual framework for the interpretation of *Desarrollo de 14 temas*, and this framework adds an intriguing extra-artistic connection to the history of Argentine Concrete art. Perhaps more importantly, it also undermines the prevailing notion that, beginning in 1948, the Argentine Concrete artists turned to simply imitating the production of Swiss Concrete art.⁴⁵⁰ In the early 1950s, in fact, Paz’s musical tenets provided another source of inventive ideas that energized the artistic production of the Concrete artists.

Epilogue

Throughout the 1940s and the 1950s, the Concrete and the Madí artists established significant contacts with a handful of musicians living and working in Argentina and Brazil. Therefore, the musical ideas that Lozza, Kosice, Maldonado, Rothfuss, and many other artists discussed with Werbin, Eitler, Paz, and Koellreutter can be used as an interpretative key for Concrete and Madí works of art. Interpreting Concrete and Madí art in relation to these musical ideas demonstrates, in the first place, that these artists did not operate in a theoretical void: their ideas took part in a larger, historically-documented cultural event that called into question established values—be these musical or artistic. Secondly, the musical ideas brought about by Werbin, Eitler,

Paz, and Koellreutter help restate and further clarify the original intention of Concrete and Madí works: to challenge traditional and established systems of representation, to prove that these established systems constitute mere visual conventions, and to expand artistic expression through the inventive use of materials and designs.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

In my discussion of Concrete and Madí art, I address various different events taking place in Argentina in the 1940s and 50s: musical performances, the rise of Peronism, reactions to the Allied victory at the end of World War II, the impact of Spanish emigres in the country, publications by Argentine writers, Peronist architecture, mass propaganda, and other local events. While the variety of subjects which I have developed is considerable, there are a number of issues which appear consistently throughout the study. In these conclusive comments, I discuss a few returning themes and consider their importance for our understanding of Concrete and Madí art.

One returning issue concerns the dialogue between Concrete and Madí art and texts or events produced within the circle of the journal *Sur*. In chapter 2, I link *Arturo*'s ideas with ideas published by two Spanish emigres who were part of *Sur*'s group—Guillermo de Torre and Ramón Gómez de la Serna. I also discuss the possibility that *Arturo*'s ideas may have been dialoguing with texts published or sponsored by Editorial *Sur*—Bioy Casares's *La invención de Morel* and Borges's "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius." In chapter 3, *Sur* and its liberal editor, Victoria Ocampo, appear affiliated with the democratic front which included the *Arturo* artists. In chapter 4, I discussed how the circles of *Sur* and *Ver y Estimar* were both anti-Peronist, and how these anti-Peronist leanings put them in the same front as the Concrete and Madí artists. Chapters 5 and 6 traced Maldonado's contacts with Jorge Romero Brest and Juan Carlos Paz, both of whom were also contributors to *Sur*.

These links between the members of the circle of *Sur* and the Concrete and Madí artists have several implications. First, they provide a specific ground for the generalized perception that the Concrete and the Madí artists promoted a cosmopolitan and international vision of culture, and that they were largely indifferent (if not opposed) to interpretations of Argentine culture which defended a more nationalist or regionalist approach. As Gradowczyk and Perazzo have put it:

Beyond the proclamations, artistic purposes, and uncompromising ideology of *Arturo*, the most surprising thing about all the texts published in the magazine was the absence of key words such as “America,” “Latin America,” “Argentina,” “Uruguay,” “homeland,” or “belonging.” The cosmopolitan makeup of the Río de la Plata artists of the generation of 1940, many of whom came from a European immigrant background, made it difficult for them to identify with pre-Columbian cultures—as suggested by Torres-García—or with *criollo* romanticism.⁴⁵¹

Previous interpretations of Concrete and Madí art, furthermore, have suggested that it is not surprising that these artistic forms emerged in Argentina because this country was—more than other countries in Latin America—modern, cosmopolitan, and in touch with international culture. It has been argued, for example, that in the 1940s Buenos Aires was a more modern city than other cities in Latin America and other cities in Europe. Together with the presence of immigrants in the country, the tendency to favor a cosmopolitan and international culture is seen as a factor which favored the development of Concrete and Madí art—especially because some of the artists were immigrants themselves.⁴⁵² Scholars, therefore, have tended to make a broad correlation between a general situation—the modern outlook of the city, the presence of immigrants—and a very specific (and very marginal) event: the appearance of non-figurative forms of art in Argentina. By bringing up a dialogue between the Concrete and Madí artists and *Sur*’s

circle, this dissertation's objective was to anchor the notion that Concrete and Madí art were part of a larger situation taking place in Argentina. The connections with *Sur*, in other words, provide a concrete link with the cosmopolitan and international cultural outlook which is generally associated with Concrete and Madí art.

The connection with *Sur* also helps to link Concrete and Madí art with artistic debates and events of the past. Some of the writers and contributors which later joined the ranks of *Sur*—especially Borges, de la Serna, and de Torre—had been part of what has been called “the avant-garde of the 1920s.” This “avant-garde” had gathered around the journals *Proa* (1924-1929) and *Martín Fierro* (1924-1927), in which these authors had been lively participants together with other writers: Oliverio Girondo, Pablo Rojas Paz, Macedonio Fernández, Raúl González Tuñón, and the painters Emilio Pettoruti and Xul Solar. Appearing on May 15th, 1924, the *Martín Fierro* manifesto advocated “a new sensibility” and claimed that it “opened unexpected landscapes and new means and forms of expression.” The magazine was written in a sardonic tone, attacking the modernist and symbolist writings of Leopoldo Lugones and his status as an icon of the Argentine literary scene. The writers associated with *Martín Fierro* are sometimes identified as the “Florida group” for the elegant street on which they met and the avant-garde literature they promoted—for example, the *greguerías* by Ramón Gómez de la Serna and Surrealism in general. The Florida group, in turn, maintained quarrels with the leftist group of writers known as “Boedo,” for the working class neighborhood where they met, because the Boedo artists advocated socially and politically-oriented forms of figurative art and narrative literature. Among the Boedo writers was Leónidas Barletta, who later

inaugurated the Teatro del Pueblo. The models of the Boedo writers were primarily Henri Barbusse and Fedor Dostoievsky, and all the writers promoted an art that would denounce social injustice. The fact that some of the writers who later joined *Sur* had been associated with the avant-garde of the 1920s may have been a significant factor for the *Arturo* artists, since the Florida group had also attacked academic and nostalgic forms of art and literature. On the other hand, as Pérez-Barreiro has noticed, the Concrete and Madí artists were far more radical than the Florida group had been, in that they regarded their avant-garde production as ultimately conducive to political revolution.

Incidentally, the dialogues which I have suggested between *Sur* and the Concrete and Madí artists do not immediately imply that the artists shared the same political views as those of the journal's editor, Victoria Ocampo, or some of the writers, such as Borges or Bioy Casares. Being anti-nazi or anti-Peronist did not necessarily imply being conservative. Indeed, many of the Concrete and Madí artists were Communists or favored a Communist ideology. Yet in the mid-1940s, the tense political climate demanded strong and definitive expressions regarding which side writers and intellectuals stood on. In this situation, Concrete and Madí artists, and *Sur*'s contributors, stood on the same side, if only for a few years.

A second theme that consistently reappears through the dissertation is the notion of opposition and polarity. This notion prevails in my reading of *Arturo* as a journal in which the most forceful notion is "invention against automatism." Reading *Arturo* in this way, in turn, geared my search for possible sources for *Arturo* outside of the usual network of Torres-García, Grete Stern, Fontana, and Huidobro. This polarized reading

also structured my contextualization of *Arturo* within political debates as an insertion within larger debates of the period—Nazism against democracy, and civilization against barbarism. Finally, I also describe the artists' reaction to Peronist images as an opposition, since in my reading, Concrete and Madí production appears as a confrontational reaction to Peronist propaganda and Peronist architecture. These oppositions serve as an analytical tool on the one hand, but they are also suggested by the historical information. As I argued in chapter 3, the literary journals linked with *Arturo* perceived the conflict at the end of World War II as an opposition between irrational forces and a democratic future. They also perceived the popularization of Rosas as a direct opposition to Sarmiento's ideas—a topic which has been thoroughly documented by political and cultural historians of this period.⁴⁵³ The anti-democratic actions of the military government, in turn, were perceived as opposed to Sarmiento's ideas, and Perón himself perceived non-figurative art as removed and even opposed to the feelings that Peronism was supposed to evoke. The oppositions which have framed my analysis of Concrete and Madí art, therefore, are not arbitrary but further insert the artists and their production in the debates that were intensely contemporary to them.

One issue which I have not discussed concerns the impact of Concrete and Madí art in later Latin American art and later Argentine art. With the probable exception of the relationship between Argentine Concrete and Madí art and Brazilian Concrete art—a subject which is still under study by María Amalia García—there is no evidence indicating that Concrete and Madí art made a significant impact in artistic scenes in the rest of Latin America, neither in the 1940s or 50s, or afterwards. Within the Argentine art

world, geometrical forms of art became popular in the 1960s and 70s—such as Arte Generativo and Op Art—but the concerns of the artists who practiced them were removed from those of the Concrete and Madí artists of the 1940s and 50s. In the works of Ary Brizzi (Fig. 117), Miguel Angel Vidal (Fig. 118), and Eduardo McEntyre, the major objective was to create a visually animated surface which would engage the viewer's perceptions of depth and of movement—an objective completely different from that of the Concrete and Madí artists, who, in what concerns painting, sought to discourage the viewer from perceiving three dimensions on a flat canvas. In sum, the Concrete and Madí groups were short lived and later artistic scenes neither incorporated nor openly rejected their ideas or their aesthetic.

If Concrete and Madí art left no evident trace in later artistic developments, the next question is: what, then, was the importance of Concrete and Madí art in the history of Argentine art, Latin American art, or twentieth-century art as a whole? It may be argued that their importance resided primarily in their initial gesture of radical break-up with the past, i.e., in the manifestos and works produced in the period between 1944 and 1947 or 1948, which has sometimes been called the period of “splendid isolation.”⁴⁵⁴ While this is certainly true, I have argued here that Concrete and Madí art generated relevant visual and conceptual dialogues with cultural manifestations and political events that existed during the entire period (and place) in which they existed (between 1944 and 1955). In this respect, I have contextualized Concrete and Madí production within three different moments. The first is the period between 1943 and 1945, characterized by the tense political climate lived during the demise of Nazism and the anti-democratic policies

of the local military dictatorship. During this period, most people living in Argentina took definite sides regarding both international and national events. A second moment is the first epoch of Peronism. This epoch began with the 1945-1946 presidential campaign disputed by Perón's Partido Laborista and the Unión Democrática, and extended until around 1949, when the state-supported economy began to show signs of strain. During this period, the government celebrated with exhilaration the achievements of social justice through political propaganda that seemingly confirmed Perón's popularity and the improvements he was bringing to the masses. Meanwhile, anti-Peronist groups grew increasingly marginalized from the sites of privileged culture, and became prone to vilify the government and its policies. A third moment goes from around 1950 until the overthrow of Perón in June 1955. This period was characterized by economic instability, social unrest, and increasingly more pervasive authoritarian policies on the part of the Peronist government. Unlike the previous period, in which political propaganda celebrated Perón's love of the masses and the benefits the workers were obtaining from the government, the propaganda of the 1950s tended to celebrate the leaders as pervading presences in all instances of everyday life. Other policies, such as those connected with education, recreation, and architecture fostered standardization (in public housing projects and elementary school textbooks, for example) and an increasing regularization of social relations (as in the highly structured and propagandistic sports championships).

I have argued in this dissertation that the importance of Concrete and Madí art resides in its animated dialogue with various aspects of its immediate time and place, which were part of the historical moments described above. Together with other co-

existing literary, theatrical, musical, and political manifestations, the artists created various forms of marginal disruption which attacked the dominant political regime and the established culture of its time.

Endnotes

¹ Néstor García Canclini, *Culturas Híbridas* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1992). Quoted in Gradowczyk and Perazzo, "Abstract art from the Río de la Plata," 61.

² "vanguardia ex/céntrica es aplicable a la autonomía de aquellos movimientos artísticos y sociales que, surgidos fuera del eje dominante de los países medulares fueron capaces de asimilar, con independencia y creatividad, el impulso utópico generador de esos movimientos." Except is from Mari Carmen Ramírez, *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar, 1918-1968* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2000), 27, n. 2. Marcelo Pacheco quotes this excerpt in "Travesías del arte no figurativo en el Río de la Plata," *Arte Abstracto Argentino* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002), 21.

³ As a whole, this analysis of the Argentine artistic scene has been inferred from my reading of *Anuario Plástica* (Buenos Aires) (1941) and *Anuario Plástica* (Buenos Aires) (1942); *Forma: Órgano de la Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos* no. 22 (Oct. 1942), and *XXXII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes* (Buenos Aires) (1942). These publications account for art which had already gained public recognition through exhibitions in private art galleries, salons, and international exhibitions. Since 1939, the independent publication *Anuario Plástica* reviewed all salons, group exhibitions, art publications, conferences, and other art-related events taking place in Argentina. As the organ of the Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos [Argentine Society of Plastic Artists] (SAAP), *Forma* represented the largest and most prestigious independent art association in the country. SAAP held a salon every year and also sponsored one-person and group exhibitions.

On Pettoruti's activities in the early 1940s, see Luisa Fabiana Servidio, "Intercambios culturales panamericanos durante la segunda guerra mundial: El viaje de Pettoruti a los Estados Unidos," in *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del Siglo XX: Sus Interrelaciones*. (Buenos Aires: Fundación Telefónica—F IARR, 2004), 55-82. On Berni's activities in the early 1940s, see Rossi, "En el fuego cruzado entre el realismo y la abstracción," in *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del Siglo XX: Sus Interrelaciones*, 83-126. On Victorica and the Grupo Impulso see Gabriela Siracusano, "Las artes plásticas en las décadas del 40 y del 50," 15-16. On Del Prete's style, see Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo, "Abstract art in the Río de la Plata," in *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953* (New York: The Americas Society, 2001), 18-20.

⁴ However, in order to avoid confusion, throughout this study I refer to all seven issues of this journal as "*Arte Madí Universal*."

⁵ See preface by Basilio Uribe (p. 9-10) and Perazzo's "Nota Preliminar" (p. 11-12) in Nelly Perazzo, *El arte Concreto en la Argentina en la década del 40* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1983).

⁶ *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Arte Madí, Perceptismo* (Buenos Aires: Museo Sívori, 1980); Jorge B. Rivera, *Madí y la vanguardia argentina* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1976); Osiris Chierico, *Reportaje a una anticipación* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Taller Libre, 1979).

⁷ Gyula Kosice, *Arte Madí* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1982).

⁸ For an extensive report on all conflicting accounts regarding the Madí manifesto, the name Madí, and the history of the Madí group, see Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde," Ph.D. Diss. (University of Essex), 1996, chapter 5.

In Appendix One, 297-308, Pérez-Barreiro narrates a virulent exchange between Kosice and Arden Quin, which took place in April 1995. While attending the London showing of the exhibition *Art from Argentina*, Arden Quin distributed a newly-written word processed document with the text of the Madí manifesto, which he claimed to have authored in 1946. By producing this document, he was hoping to publicly discredit Kosice, who was also present at the opening and who claims that he is the author of the original manuscript. There remain questions regarding the authenticity of this document.

⁹ For a brief discussion of these conflicting accounts, see, for example, Gradowczyk and Perazzo, "Abstract art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953," 43.

¹⁰ Raúl Lozza, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

¹¹ Juan Melé, *La vanguardia del 40 en Argentina: memorias de un artista concreto* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Cinco, 1999), 139.

¹² "Entrevista a Tomás Maldonado, by Giacinto di Pietrantonio," reprinted in Tomás Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Infinito, 1997), 117-127, and reprinted and updated in *Arte Abstracto Argentino* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002), 59-63.

¹³ For an account of these contradictory accounts, see Cristina Rossi, "Torres-García en el Buenos Aires de los primeros cuarenta. Acerca de la circulación de la obra *torresgarciana* antes de la aparición de la revista *Arturo*," *Latin American Studies Association* (2004): 1-19. These contradictory accounts are discussed more extensively in chapter 1.

¹⁴ For examples, see Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, chapter v, 87-107.

¹⁵ Ibid., chapter I, "El arte concreto en Europa," 13-32, and chapter II, "Antecedentes en el país," 33-51.

¹⁶ Dawn Ades, *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era, 1820-1980* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989). For information about the organization of the exhibition, see "Introduction" (p. 1-5). See also Ades, "Arte Madí/Arte Concreto-Invención," (p. 241-251) and Guy Brett, "A radical leap," (p. 253-283).

¹⁷ Aracy Amaral, "Abstract Constructivist trends in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia," in *Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century*, edited by Waldo Rasmussen with Fatima Bercht and Elizabeth Ferrer (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1993), 86-99.

¹⁸ Serge Lemoine, "Nouveau monde," in *Art d'Amérique latine, 1911-1968* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 1992), 306-307. This catalog also included an informative article exclusively on Madí and Concrete art: Agnès de Maistre, "Les groupes Arte Concreto-Invención et Madí," 336-348.

¹⁹ Mari Carmen Ramírez, "Vital Structures: The Constructive Nexus in South America," in *Inverted Utopias: Avant-garde art in Latin America* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 191.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 192-193.

²¹ Marcelo Pacheco, "Introducción," in *MALBA: Museo Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires*, edited by Marcelo Pacheco (Buenos Aires: Fundación Pettoruti, 2001), 15-39.

²² See for example, *Geometric Abstraction: art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Art Museum, 2001); *Geo-Metrías: Abstracción Geométrica Latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros* (Buenos Aires: MALBA, 2003).

²³ Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Introduction," in *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Austin: Blanton Museum of Art and Fundación Cisneros, 2007), 13-15.

²⁴ Addressing these debates is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but suffice it to say that the question whether it is possible to write a history (or even histories) of "Latin American art," or whether comprehensive exhibitions of the art of this region can be organized, continues to be a matter of controversy. For debates about Latin America and Latin American art, see Carmen Hernández, "Más allá de la exotización y la sociologización del arte latinoamericano," in *Estudios y otra prácticas intelectuales latinoamericanas en Cultura y Poder*, coordinated by Daniel Mandato (Caracas: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), 2002), 167-176; Carlos Altamirano, "América Latina en espejos argentinos," in *Para un programa de historia intelectual, y otros ensayos* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores Argentina, 2005), 105-133.

²⁵ The contradictions raised by these exhibitions were discussed during the first semester (Spring 2005) of the Cisneros Research Seminar in Abstraction and Contemporary Art, sponsored by the Fundación Cisneros and organized by the Latin American Department of the Blanton Museum of Art. Some of the seminar participants were Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (Seminar Director), Gina Tarver, Erin Aldana, Ana Pozzi-Harris, Courtney Gilbert, Cecilia Brunson, Alberto McKelligan, Michael Wellen, and the guest speakers were Ariel Jiménez, Luis Camnitzer, and Cecilia de Torres. For a record of these discussions, see Ana Pozzi-Harris, "Thinking about the Cisneros Research Seminar in Abstraction and Contemporary Art," unpublished manuscript, Spring 2005.

²⁶ *Argentina Arte Concreto-Invención, 1945, Grupo Madí, 1946* (New York: Rachel Adler Gallery, 1990); *Arte Concreto-Invención/Arte Madí* (Basel: Galerie Von Bartha, 1991).

²⁷ *Art from Argentina* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1994).

²⁸ *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953* (New York: The Americas Society, 2001).

²⁹ *Arte Abstracto Argentino* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002).

³⁰ *Madí: L'art sud-américain* (Paris: Musée de Grenoble, 2002).

³¹ Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "The Negation of All Melancholy," in *Art from Argentina*, 54-65; Adriana Lauría, "Arte Abstracto en la Argentina. Intermittencia e instauración," in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 22-47; Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo, "Abstract art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953," in *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata*, 15-70; Mario Gradowczyk, "Arte Concreto-Invencción; Madí: The awakening of the Avant-Garde," in *Argentina, Arte Concreto-Invencción 1945 Grupo Madí 1946*, n.p.; Agnès de Maistre, "Qu'est-ce que Madí?" in *Madí: L'art sud'américain*, 8-42.

³² For information about the organization of the exhibition, see Marcelo Pacheco, "Travesías del arte no figurativo en el Río de la Plata: experiencias de una vanguardia ex/céntrica, 1914-1955," in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 16-21. See Florencia Battiti and Cristina Rossi, "Inscripción del Arte Abstracto en el Río de la Plata," in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 195-206.

³³ For information about this group, see Claudia Laudano, "Carmelo Arden Quin: Estética y ascética de un Madí," *Art Nexus* no. 47 (Jan.-Mar. 2003): 60-65.

³⁴ *Arte Madí Internacional* (Madrid: Editorial Godoy, 2000).

³⁵ For information about this museum, see www.Madímuseum.org.

³⁶ See *Arden Quin: 12 de marzo al 4 de mayo de 1997*, Fundación Arte y Tecnología (Madrid: Uveuve, 1997); *Arden Quin* (Paris: L'Espace, 1983); Agnès de Maistre, *Carmelo Arden Quin* (Nice: Demaistre, 1996); Shelley Goodman, *Carmelo Arden Quin: When Art Jumped Out of Its Cage* (Dallas: Madí Museum, 2004).

³⁷ "Experiments with Form in Buenos Aires," in *Art History*, third edition, by Marilyn Stokstad, with contributions by David A. Binkley, Claudia Brown, Patricia J. Darish, Patrick Frank, Robert D. Mowry, Sara E. Orel, and D. Fairchild Ruggles (Upper Saddle River: New Jersey, 2008, 2005), 1141-1143. Quotation from page 1141.

³⁸ Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde, 1944-1950." Ph.D. Diss (University of Essex), 1996.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, chapter 1, "Argentina 1920-1940: Civilization and Modernism," 22-49.

⁴⁰ "conjunto de instituciones, de formas de legitimidad, de arbitraje cultural y de imposición de valores." Andrea Giunta, *Vanguardia, internacionalismo y política: Arte Argentino en los años 60* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2001), 32.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 46-83.

⁴² Ana Longoni y Daniela Lucena, "De cómo el "júbilo creador" se trastocó en "desfachatez". El pasaje de Maldonado y los concretos por el Partido Comunista. 1945-1948." *Políticas de la Memoria* no. 4 (Summer 2003/2004): 117-128.

⁴³ María Amalia García, "Concretismo Regional: formas de intercambio entre Argentina y Brasil." Paper presented at the symposium The Geometry of Hope: Latin American art from the

Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, Blanton Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, February 17, 2007.

⁴⁴ María Amalia García, “La construcción del arte abstracto. Impactos e interconexiones entre el internacionalismo cultural paulista y la escena artística argentina, 1949-1953,” in *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del siglo XX: sus interrelaciones* (Buenos Aires, Fundación Telefónica – FIAAR, 2004), 15-54.

⁴⁵ María Amalia García, “Entre Argentina y Brasil. Episodios en la formación de una abstracción regional,” in *Arte de Posguerra: Jorge Romero Brest y la Revista Ver y Estimar*, edited by Andrea Giunta y Laura Malosetti Costa (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2005), 137-152.

⁴⁶ Cristina Rossi, “Vanguardia concreta rioplatense. Acerca del arte concreto y la música,” *ICAA Working Papers* International Center for the Arts of the Americas, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (Sept. 2007): 11-16; Cristina Rossi, “En clave de polémica. Discusiones por la abstracción en los tiempos del peronismo,” *Separata*, Centro de Investigaciones del Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano, Universidad Nacional de Rosario, v. VI n. 11 (Nov. 2006): 35-55; Cristina Rossi, “Confluencia de intereses. La galería Krayd como punto de encuentro,” *IV Jornadas de Investigación en Arte y Arquitectura en Argentina*, Universidad Nacional de La Plata (2006): 1-11; Cristina Rossi, “Una pulseada por la abstracción. Jorge Romero Brest entre Margherita Sarfatti y Lionello Venturi,” in A. Giunta y L. Malosetti Costa, *Jorge Romero Brest y la revista Ver y Estimar. Arte latinoamericano en el debate de posguerra (1948-1955)* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2007), 51-69; Cristina Rossi, “Los nuevos de entonces. El crítico Romero Brest y la abstracción argentina y brasileña,” *Concinnitas: Revista do Instituto de Artes de la Uerj y la Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro*, v. 6, n. 7 (Dec. 2004): 7-31; Cristina Rossi, “Torres García en el Buenos Aires de los primeros cuarenta,” 1-19; Cristina Rossi, “Variaciones sobre un mismo tema. La obra sobre papel de Manuel Espinosa,” *Manuel Espinosa. Antología sobre papel* (Buenos Aires: Museo de Arte Moderno, 2003), 5-7.

⁴⁷ Cristina Rossi, “En el fuego cruzado entre el realismo y la abstracción,” in *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del siglo XX, sus interrelaciones* (Buenos Aires, Fundación Telefónica – FIAAR, 2004): 85-125.

⁴⁸ Gabriela Siracusano, “Punto y línea sobre el campo,” in *Desde la otra vereda: momentos del debate por un arte moderno en la argentina (1880-1960)*. Archivos del CAIA (Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Jilguero, 1998), 179-183; Gabriela Siracusano, “Las artes plásticas en las décadas de '40 y el '50,” in *Nueva Historia Argentina: Arte, Sociedad y Política*, directed by Emilio Burucúa (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999).

⁴⁹ María Cecilia Tomasini, *Una revisión a la relación arte-ciencia en la obra de Raúl Lozza* (Buenos Aires: Centro Cultural Borges, 1991).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ The use of the terms “Concreto” and “invención” is documented in several articles printed in the *Revista de Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Aug. 1946), published by the Asociación de Arte Concreto Invención. The term “Concreto” for example, appears five times in the “Manifiesto Invencionista” (p. 8); in the unsigned text “Nuestra Militancia,” (p. 2); and in the titles and texts

of Tomás Maldonado's articles "Lo abstracto y lo concreto en el arte moderno" (pp. 5-7) and "Los artistas Concretos, el realismo y la realidad," (p. 10). Similarly, the terms "invención" and "invencionismo" are repeatedly used in the "Manifiesto invencionista," (p. 8); in Lozza's "Hacia una música invencionista," (p. 3); Bailey's "Sobre invención poética," (p. 13); in the untitled article "Invención integral," (p. 10), and others.

⁵² See Carlsund, Van Doesburg, Hélion, Tutundjian, and Wantz, "The Basis of Concrete Painting," in *Stephen Bann, The Tradition of Constructivism* (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 191-194. The fact that the Argentine Concrete artists were well acquainted with the developments of European art is indicated in Maldonado's article "Lo abstracto y lo concreto en el arte moderno," *Revista de Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 5-8.

⁵³ "[E]l verdadero arte realista no busca reflejar, sino inventar. Por otra parte, copiar la realidad no es afirmarla; solo la actitud inventiva, al afirmar lo concreto, no invalida ni desprestigia al mundo." "¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Tomás Maldonado." *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 10.

⁵⁴ "El arte Concreto habitúa a la relación directa con las cosas, y no con las ficciones de las cosas." Edgar Bayley, Antonio Caraduñe, Simón Contreras, Manuel O. Espinosa, Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Obdulio Landi, Raúl Lozza, R. V. D. Lozza, Tomás Maldonado, Alberto Molenberg, Primaldo Mónaco, Oscar Núñez, Lidy Prati, Jorge Souza, Matilde Werbin. "Manifiesto Invencionista." *Revista Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 8.

⁵⁵ Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde," 152-153; 160-163.

⁵⁶ See my discussion of Maldonado's "Actualidad y porvenir del arte concreto" in chapter 5.

⁵⁷ Dick Hebdige, *Subcultures: The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1979).

⁵⁸ Barthes, *Mythologies*, selected and translated from the French by Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972).

⁵⁹ Roland Barthes, "Style and its Image," in *Literary Style: A Symposium* (edited and in part translated by Seymour Chatman) (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1-13.

⁶⁰ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological state apparatuses: Notes towards an investigation [1969]," in *Lenin and Philosophy, and other essays*, translated from the French by Ben Brewster (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127-187.

⁶¹ Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002), 94-136.

⁶² *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944). Throughout this study, I have extracted all quotations from and references to *Arturo* from the facsimile edition of the original journal. This facsimile edition was published in 1994 by the Centro de Estudios de la Vanguardia Hispánica, University of Aberdeen, Scotland. I am grateful to Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro for providing me with this document.

In *Arturo*'s table of contents, the date of the publication appears as "Summer 1944." However, the essay that Edgar Bayley included in *Arturo* is dated "March 1944," i.e., one month after the end of the summer in the southern hemisphere. Edgar Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. In *Literatura de Vanguardia*, the critic Juan Jacobo Bajarlía provides an early account of the journal *Arturo* and of the movements that sprang from it. In this text, published in 1946, he claims that *Arturo* appeared in April 1944. See Juan Jacobo Bajarlía, *Literatura de Vanguardia: del Ulyses de Joyce y las escuelas poéticas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Araujo, 1946), 162.

⁶³ The National Salon was the most important artistic event that took place each year in Argentina and, for artists, success at the National Salon implied success in the Argentine art world as a whole. It opened every year on September 21st, and was held at the National Museum of Fine Arts. For an excellent discussion on the role of national salons in Argentina see *Tras los pasos de la norma: Salones Nacionales de Bellas Artes (1911-1989)*, coordinated by Martha Penhos and Diana Wechler (Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Jilguero, 1989).

⁶⁴ Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

⁶⁵ "Se ve pues que no puede ser ya la expresión, la que domine el espíritu de la composición artística actual; ni mucho menos una representación, o mágica o signo." Arden Quin, [untitled essay], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) n. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁶⁶ "la imagen nacía como signo de una realidad personal, natural, conceptual, etc., pero nunca como una realidad independiente y autónoma, como una verdadera vivencia." Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁶⁷ "El arte abstracto...aseguraré la armonía de lo polidimensional, sin necesidad de adaptaciones psíquicas." Gyula Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁶⁸ "En el momento actual, expresionismo, automatismo onírico, etc., importan nada más que reacciones y retrocesos. Y deben ser desterrados, abolidos." Carmelo Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁶⁹ "Pero este onirismo puro conduciría a una mayor estupidez aún, ya que su única fuente sería una constante y sistemática evasión. . ." Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁷⁰ "Nada [hay] tampoco con Dalí cuyo arte basado en imágenes copias de experiencias terminadas importa solo una reacción." Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁷¹ "INVENTAR: Hallar o descubrir a fuerza de ingenio o meditación, o por mero acaso, una cosa nueva o no conocida./ Hallar, imaginar, crear, su obra el poeta o el artista/ INVENCION: Acción y efecto de inventar./Cosa inventada./Hallazgo." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): back cover.

⁷² "Toda preocupación representativa, toda voluntad de convertir a la obra de arte en un intérprete de no importa qué realidad interior, de qué sutil y nueva actitud, toda simbología, por muy difusa

que sea, falsea la imagen y la despoja de todo valor estético. La novedad no puede radicar hoy más que en la imagen invención. Todo realismo es falso, todo expresionismo es falso, todo romanticismo es falso.” Bailey, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) n. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁷³ “implica primero la imaginación, aflorando en todas sus contradicciones; y luego, la conciencia ordenándola y depurándola de toda imagen representativa naturalista (aunque sea de sueños), y de todo símbolo (aunque sea subconciente).” Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁷⁴ Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde,” 97.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 79-80.

⁷⁶ For most of the *Arturo* artists, this journal was their first publication, but there are two exceptions. In 1941, Tomás Maldonado, together with painters Alfredo Hlito, Claudio Girola, and Jorge Brito, published a manifesto entitled “Manifiesto de los cuatro jóvenes.” See reprint of this manifesto in Tomás Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos*, 33. Arden Quin claims to have launched a review called *Síntesis* in 1938, and in 1941, to have been a co-founder of the journal *El Universitario*, where he states that he published political articles, poems, and his first pieces of art criticism. (See “Chronology” in *Arden Quin: 12 de marzo a 4 de mayo 1997* (Madrid: Fundación de Arte y Tecnología, 1997), 19-29. No trace of these publications exists, however, so Arden Quin’s statements are impossible to verify.

⁷⁷ Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

⁷⁸ Bailey, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁷⁹ Kosice, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁸⁰ Arden Quin, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁸¹ Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁸² Rhod Rothfuss, “El marco: un problema de plástica actual,” *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

⁸³ For information on the life and career of Joaquín Torres-García, see *El Taller Torres-García: The School of the South and its legacy*, edited by Mari Carmen Ramírez (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992).

⁸⁴ Joaquín Torres-García, *Universalismo Constructivo: contribución a la unificación del arte y la cultura de América* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1944).

⁸⁵ I am grateful to Cecilia de Torres for making this information available to me.

⁸⁶ The details about how Torres-García’s contribution made its way to the hands of the *Arturo* artists are not clear. For an intelligent discussion, see Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde,” 67.

⁸⁷ Cristina Rossi, "Torres García en el Buenos Aires de los primeros cuarenta," 1-19.

⁸⁸ "Alfredo Hlito: las vanguardias ya no existen," *Cultura* v. 4 no. 22 (Sep./Oct. 1989): 9.

⁸⁹ Agnès de Maistre, "Les groupes Arte Concreto-Invencción et Madí," 336-337; de Maistre, *Carmelo Arden Quin*, 17-20; Goodman, *Carmelo Arden Quin*, 81-113.

⁹⁰ Some examples were *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, held at Fundación Proa, 2002; *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo*, held at The Americas Society, 2001; and other shows.

⁹¹ Pérez-Barreiro, "The negation of all melancholy," 63; Gradowicz and Perazzo, "Abstract art from the Río de la Plata," 39; "Entrevista a Tomás Maldonado, por Giacinto di Pietrantonio," reprinted in *Escritos Preulmianos*, 117-127, and reprinted and updated in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 59-63; Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

⁹² For a more detailed account of these exchanges, see Gradowicz and Perazzo, "Abstract art from the Río de la Plata," 45-47.

⁹³ "El "constructivismo" uruguayo es el ejemplo típico de la mezcla ecléctica. En las obras constructivas de Torres-García, encontramos cubismo (mal cubismo), impresionismo, cocina del siglo XIX (sobre todo esto) y simbolismo barato (soles, muñecos pictográficos, pescaditos)." Tomás Maldonado, "Torres-García contra el arte moderno," reprinted in Tomás Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos*, 51-54. Quotation from p. 53. Originally published in *Boletín de la Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invencción* (Buenos Aires) (Dec. 1946).

⁹⁴ "Tanto el "arte constructivo" como la "pintura" son puestas por Torres-García dentro de la advocación de la sección áurea. Partiendo del idealismo pitagórico, de la mística del número, de una filosofía de hace 2500 años, olvidando o ignorando las nuevas conquistas de la ciencia moderna, Torres-García propone así una composición basada exclusivamente sobre una aritmética y una geometría de Escuela Primaria." Ibid.

⁹⁵ "La batalla del arte auténticamente moderno es, a no dudarlo, la batalla por la invención." Ibid. Quotation from p. 54.

⁹⁶ The last page the 1944 edition of *Universalismo Constructivo* (published by Editorial Poseidón) stated that the printing of the book was finished on April 5th, 1944. The book, therefore, could not have been sold in bookstores anytime before that, and most likely, it was not available until a couple of weeks after that. Meanwhile, the latest date which *Arturo* is claimed to have appeared is "April 1944." (Bajaría, *Literatura de Vanguardia*, 162.

⁹⁷ "excluye, pues, lo dramático, la expresión, lo subjetivo, que es el rail por el que va el romántico," Torres-García, "Lección 68: La pintura contemporánea (El Neoplasticismo)" [1936], in *Universalismo Constructivo*, 475.

⁹⁸ "y quien no abandone el patrón viejo de la expresión subjetiva y de la *representación* por la *representación* no estará en el plano evolutivo de hoy." Ibid. Emphasis in original.

⁹⁹ “la aberración o depravación de un alma turbia.” Torres-García, “Lección 136: Cubismo, Neoplasticismo, Dadaísmo, Superrealismo frente al Universalismo Constructivo” [1941], in *Universalismo Constructivo*, 915.

¹⁰⁰ “Contra ese desórden, el órden; contra esa enfermedad, la salud; contra esa degeneración, juventud; contra esa arrebatada exaltación, serenidad.” Ibid.

¹⁰¹ “De abrir las compuertas, de dejar pasar todo. A todo, menos lo sensato. Todo bienvenido en nombre de la locura, en nombre de la expresión libre, incontrolada, audaz y agresiva.” Joaquín Torres-García, “Con respecto a una futura creación literaria,” *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁰² “es la mala costumbre descriptiva naturalista, que debemos extirpar de nuestro espíritu.” Ibid.

¹⁰³ “Y así ya estoy en el segundo momento. En el de la construcción.” Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ “Ya no más las cosas, sino el ritmo en que ahora están, que es el de la esencialidad de la creación poética.” Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ “un orden lógico.” Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Joaquín Torres-García, “Divertimento,” *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. My emphasis. I apologize for not providing a translated version of this fragment, but the phonetic nuances of the poem, which are key to understand its structure, are completely lost in translation.

¹⁰⁷ Gyula Kosice, “Densidad del Paisaje Abandonado,” *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) n. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁰⁸ “Un pensamiento tan vivo que, como el espíritu de una planta o de un animal, tiene una arquitectura propia, adorna la naturaleza con una cosa nueva.” Vicente Huidobro, “El creacionismo.” <http://vicentehuidobro.uchile.cl/manifiesto1/htm> “El creacionismo” by Vicente Huidobro was published in French in Vicente Huidobro, *Manifestes* (Paris: La Revue Mondiale, 1925).

¹⁰⁹ “En este momento, cuando más lejos parece que está el artista de la naturaleza, Vicente Huidobro dirá: “Nunca el hombre ha estado más cerca de la naturaleza, que ahora que no trata de imitarla en sus apariencias, sino haciendo como ella, imitándola en lo profundo de sus leyes constructivas, en la realización de un todo dentro del mecanismo de la producción de formas nuevas.” Rothfuss, “El marco: un problema de plástica actual,” n.p.

¹¹⁰ “El dadaísmo, el surrealismo, el creacionismo, al dar imágenes puras, sin preocupación por su acuerdo con realidades externas, echan las bases para la concepción de la nueva imagen. Esta es la idea estética más importante del momento en que vivimos.” Bailey, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹¹¹ Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

¹¹² Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde," 81.

¹¹³ Ibid., 82.

¹¹⁴ Gradowczyk and Perazzo, "Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata," 36; Lauría, "Arte Abstracto en la Argentina: Intermitencia e Instauración," 33-34.

¹¹⁵ Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

¹¹⁶ Luis Priamo, "La obra de Grete Stern en la Argentina," in *Grete Stern: Obra Fotográfica en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 1995), 12-37. Quotation from p. 22. Another book on Grete Stern is: *Grete Stern: Fotografía en la Argentina, 1937-1931* (Buenos Aires: La Azotea, 1988).

¹¹⁷ "Ya en la primera mitad de los años 30, Fontana se encuentra en el centro de las búsquedas plásticas de la vanguardia europea, entre figuración y no-figuración." *Fontana: Obras Maestras de la Colección Lucio Fontana de Milán* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 1999), 104.

¹¹⁸ For information about Fontana's activities in Argentina before his definitive return to Italy, see Andrea Giunta, "Crónica de Posguerra: Lucio Fontana en Buenos Aires," in *Fontana: Obras Maestras de la Colección Lucio Fontana de Milán* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 1999), 72-87.

¹¹⁹ "Entrevista a Tomas Maldonado, por Giacinto di Pietrantonio," reprinted in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 59-63.

¹²⁰ Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, 42-46; Enrico Crispolti, "Fontana y la Abstracción," in *Arte Abstracto Argentino* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002), 48-57.

¹²¹ Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

¹²² Luis Alberto Romero, "Una empresa cultural: los libros baratos," in Leandro H. Gutierrez and Luis Alberto Romero, *Sectores populares: cultura y política. Buenos Aires en la entreguerra* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1995), 45-67. Other texts providing information about this phenomenon are: Raúl Bottaro, *La edición de libros en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Troquel, 1964); Eustasio Antonio García, *Evolución histórica de nuestra industria editorial* (Buenos Aires: Biblioteca Franklin, 1965); Jorge B. Rivera, *El escritor y la industria cultural* (Buenos Aires: Atuel, 1998).

¹²³ See statistical figures in several tables in Bottaro, *La edición de libros en la Argentina*, 33-34.

¹²⁴ Guillaume Apollinaire, *Poemas de Guillaume Apollinaire* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Proa in 1929); Guillaume Apollinaire, "El Marinero de Amsterdam," in *Los mejores cuentos policiales*, edited by Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy Casares (Buenos Aires: Editorial Emecé, 1943).

¹²⁵ Karl Marx and León Trotsky, *El pensamiento vivo de Karl Marx* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1940); Karl Marx and Ernst Ludwig Plank, *A dónde va la ciencia?* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1941); Karl Marx, Jean Fréville, and Friedrich Engels, *Sobre la literatura y el arte* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Problemas, 1940).

¹²⁶ Elie Faure, *Historia del Arte*, 5 vols. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943-44). (The fifth volume was “El arte moderno”)

¹²⁷ Ramón Gómez de la Serna, *Greguerías* (Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe-Argentina, 1940), Ramón Gómez de la Serna, *Greguerías* (Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe-Argentina, 1943); Salvador Dalí, *Vida Secreta de Salvador Dalí* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Editorial Poseidón, 1944).

¹²⁸ Gutierrez and Romero, “Sociedades barriales y bibliotecas populares,” 69-105.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹³⁰ Romero, “Una empresa cultural: los libros baratos,” 46-49.

¹³¹ Gutierrez and Romero, “Sociedades barriales y bibliotecas populares,” 69-105.

¹³² For biographical information on Arden Quin, Kosice, and Maldonado, I am relying on Pérez-Barreiro’s dissertation. Pérez Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde,” 42-62. While other scholars before him had cited some of this information as well, his is the most comprehensive and reliable account.

Regarding the activities of Edgar Bayley before the publication of *Arturo*, I have not come across any significant information in the course of my research, and neither has Pérez Barreiro. Since Bayley was the brother of Tomás Maldonado, the discussion on Maldonado’s social background probably applies to Bayley as well.

¹³³ The story of Maldonado’s expulsion from the National Academy of Fine Arts is not completely clear. Pérez-Barreiro notes that around 1942 the artist made a drawing inspired by Picasso for which he was criticized by his teacher and called to the Director. It is not known whether Maldonado left or was told to leave the Academia. Pérez-Barreiro also points out that Maldonado’s friend Alfredo Hlito also left the school at this time, possibly as a gesture of solidarity. Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde, 1944-1950,” 62.

¹³⁴ “De ellos hemos tenido las primeras informaciones directas sobre los movimientos de vanguardia, sobre el significado del cubismo, del futurismo, del dadaísmo, del constructivismo, del abstraccionismo. A través de ellos hemos podido recibir la contribución innovativa de la arquitectura moderna. De sus deterioradas valijas de cartón de hombres en fuga, salían milagrosamente documentos que nos fascinaban, y de los cuales estábamos en condiciones de obtener informaciones preciosas sobre mutaciones radicales que se habían producido en Europa entre las dos guerras y aún antes, documentos ya amarillentos, recogidos en Berlín, Colonia, París, Madrid, Budapest, Praga, Moscú, Milán. Se trataba por lo común de manifiestos, panfletos, libros, revistas, catálogos, que servían a menudo como argumentos o contraargumentos en nuestra búsqueda febril de un nuevo modo de entender la práctica artística.” “Entrevista a Tomás Maldonado, por Giacinto di Pietrantonio,” in *Escritos Preulmianos*, 121.

¹³⁵ For more information about Spanish exiles and emigres in Argentina during this period, see Emilia de Zuleta, *Espanoles en la Argentina: el exilio literario de 1936* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Atril, 1999); Dora Schwazstein, *Entre Franco y Perón: memoria e identidad del exilio republicano español en la Argentina* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2001); Emilia de Zuleta, *Relaciones*

literarias entre España y la Argentina (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica del Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, 1983).

¹³⁶ “un periódico de mayoría, al servicio de la cultura Hispanoamericana.” See the characterization of *Correo Literario* in Héctor René Lafleur, *Las revistas literarias argentinas, 1893-1967 (edición corregida y aumentada)* (Buenos Aires: CEAL, 1968), 193.

¹³⁷ “Arturo K 2”, es el título de una revista que aparecerá pronto en Buenos Aires. Dedicada especialmente a las Letras y las Artes Abstractas, promete ser de valor excepcionalmente interesante. La edita el Grupo Arturo.” Published in *Correo Literario* (Buenos Aires) v. 2 no. 5 (Jan. 15, 1944): 2.

¹³⁸ Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹³⁹ “F. Delanglade (por ejemplo) movido por su espíritu psicoanalítico reivindica la reproducción de los sueños en estado primitivo.” Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁴⁰ “Pero este onirismo puro conduciría a una mayor estupidez aún, . . . El residuo es sencillo, se hace parasitaria para terapéutica y estudio del psicoanálisis.” Ibid.

¹⁴¹ For biographical information about Angel Garma, see Iñaki Markez, “Angel Garma: De Bilbao a los orígenes y desarrollo del psicoanálisis argentino,” *Norte de Salud Mental* no. 17 (2003): 68-73.

¹⁴² Angel Garma, “El método psicoanalítico de interpretación de los sueños: introducción a la psicología onírica.” *Revista de Psicoanálisis* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 1 (1943): 39-62.

¹⁴³ “En general, el dibujar los sueños es de poco valor para la interpretación.” Ibid. 47.

¹⁴⁴ “Así se va disponiendo gradualmente de una serie de asociaciones que poco a poco van relacionándose entre sí, hasta que dejan entrever los deseos que originaron el sueño.” Ibid., 46.

¹⁴⁵ “Por ello hay que insistir que sólo del modo anteriormente citado se realiza en psicoanálisis la interpretación onírica. Tanto, que en el año 1937, después de casi medio siglo de investigar estos temas, cuando artistas surrealistas enviaron a Freud una colección de dibujos-sueños para conocer su opinión, el les contestó textualmente que, sin el conocimiento de las asociaciones de los sujetos, ni de las circunstancias en que habían sido soñados, los sueños no tenían ninguna significación. Lo mismo que Freud, debe conducirse toda persona interesada en la psicología, si pretende verdaderamente saber bien cómo se originan y qué es lo que expresan los sueños.” Ibid., 62.

¹⁴⁶ Ramón Gómez de la Serna, *Ismos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943).

¹⁴⁷ For biographical and critical information on Ramón Gómez de la Serna, see “Ramón Gómez de la Serna.” *Wikipedia, La enciclopedia libre*. 5 sep 2005; 21:34 UTC 1 feb 2006, 19:41 <[http://es.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ram%C3%B3nG%C3%B3mez de la Serna&oldid=1281247](http://es.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ram%C3%B3nG%C3%B3mez%20de%20la%20Serna&oldid=1281247)>.

¹⁴⁸ Gómez de la Serna's lecture was recorded in "Conferencias," *Anuario Plástica* (Buenos Aires) (1941): 64-66. Cited in p. 64.

¹⁴⁹ "automatismo psíquico puro, en función del cual uno se propone expresar el funcionamiento real del pensamiento. Dictado del pensar con ausencia de todo control ejercido por la razón y al margen de toda preocupación estética o moral." Gómez de la Serna, "Surrealismo" in *Ismos*, 268.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 272.

¹⁵¹ "Bretón y todos los suyos ansían la evasión, palabra llena de anhelo que presenta a una juventud ahogada en un mundo estúpidamente burgués." Ibid., 276.

¹⁵² "Todo en sus obras son fugas, cosas que se evaden, mujeres que dicen medias palabras, la incertidumbre suma." Ibid.

¹⁵³ "El automatismo no dió nunca una criatura viva. Ha dado fetos." Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁵⁴ "Si existiera la muerte no habría ningún principio. Y toda tendencia a otorgarle un significado vital es decadencia y descomposición." Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁵⁵ Gómez de la Serna, "Surrealismo," in *Ismos*, 273.

¹⁵⁶ "Aragon, que siempre revolotea alrededor del surrealismo, lo ha definido así: 'El vicio llamado surrealista consiste en el uso apasionado e inmoderado del narcótico de la imagen . . .' Ibid., 269.

¹⁵⁷ "un caballo que es al mismo tiempo la imagen de una mujer." Gómez de la Serna, "Daliismo" in *Ismos*, 425.

¹⁵⁸ "La imagen doble. . . aclaradora de instintos, lograda de deseos solidificados. . ." Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ "Pero este onirismo puro conduciría a una mayor estupidez aún, ya que su única fuente sería una constante y sistemática evasión. . ." Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁶⁰ ". . . una intimidad cerrada, en el enquistamiento de la personalidad. . ." Ibid.

¹⁶¹ *Ismos* included nine black and white reproductions of Dalí's works, and a color plate. Some of the works reproduced were *Accommodations of Desire* (1929) (p. 435), *The Great Paranoid* (1936) (p. 427), and *Impression of Africa* (1938) (p. 429).

¹⁶² Guillermo de Torre, "Apología del Cubismo y de Picasso," in *La Aventura y el Orden* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1943).

¹⁶³ Emilia de Zuleta, paraphrasing Guillermo de Torre, in Emilia de Zuleta, *Guillermo de Torre entre España y América* (Mendoza: EDIUNC, 1993), 10.

¹⁶⁴ For biographical information about Guillermo de Torre, see De Zuleta, *Guillermo de Torre entre España y América*, 9-44.

¹⁶⁵ “Lo que diferencia al cubismo de la pintura antigua es que no se trata de un arte de imitación, sino de un arte de concepción que tiende a elevarse hasta la creación.” Ibid., 41.

¹⁶⁶ “. . . En efecto: todos sus teorizantes coinciden en afirmar que el cuadro cubista no debe nada a la naturaleza, y se sirve de formas y colores no por su valor imitativo, sino por su valor puro, plástico.” Ibid., 42.

¹⁶⁷ “[El cuadro] constituía un objeto particular, poseedor de una existencia propia, al margen del tema que lo inspiró.” Ibid., 42-43.

¹⁶⁸ “. . . todas estas teorías tienen un desembocamiento común: la construcción plástica, el anhelo de creación que es el elemento obsesivo común, dominador de todos los ismos y que se extiende de un modo especial a la poesía. Creación es la consigna unitaria.” Ibid., 52.

¹⁶⁹ “. . . afirmación la supremacía creadora del artista, por encima de los modelos naturales.” De Torre, “Apología del Cubismo,” 43.

¹⁷⁰ Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁷¹ “El arte cubista apela a la inteligencia antes que a los sentidos. Es un arte más cerebral que sensual.” De Torre, “Apología del Cubismo,” 42.

¹⁷² “Amo la regla que corrige la emoción.” Ibid., 49.

¹⁷³ “Y corroboración de una sentencia de Leonardo da Vinci: “La pintura è cosa mentale.” Ibid., 43.

¹⁷⁴ “. . . una alta conciencia artística, y cálculos, incluso fríos, pacientemente elaborados y aplicados.” Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁷⁵ “La dirección surrealista que reacciona furiosamente contra los miembros de la realidad; contra su rigor formal y su antianecdótico, insuflando los cuadros con una intención literaria.” De Torre, “Apología del Cubismo,” 55.

¹⁷⁶ “Solo en ésta última pueden advertirse claras resonancias del cubismo. En rigor, el arte abstracto viene a ser la prolongación del cubismo. Lo prueba, ante todo, el que varios pintores de aquel movimiento hayan venido a engrosar los cuadros abstractos. Tales, por ejemplo, Gleizes, Delaunay, Herbin, Valmier, Villon, quienes figuran en el grupo Abstraction, Creation, Art non representatif y la revista de idéntico título, órgano del mismo. Además, sus comunes preocupaciones estéticas, el culto de la plástica pura, con exclusión de todo elemento anecdótico, literario, naturalista; y finalmente, los restantes que llegaron a la no figuración por un concepto de

orden puramente geométrico o mediante el empleo exclusivo de elementos abstractos, tales como círculos, líneas, planos, etc.

Tal grupo, desde luego, es muy heterogeneo. Junto a los antiguos cubistas mencionados coexisten en él pintores de otras procedencias: algunos neoplasticistas holandeses como Mondrian y Vantongerloo; ciertos abstractos alemanes del grupo de Hannover: Schwitters, Vordemberge-Gildewart; ex-dadaístas como Arp; ex-futuristas como Prampolini; sin olvidar a un abstracto neto como Torres-García, quien crea el constructivismo. Pero en todos ellos se perciben reflejos de la lección cubista, cierto es que practicada en un campo mas restringido. Pues en vez de ensanchar la órbita de aquel movimiento y hacer penetrar su arte en el mundo de lo representativo. . . se retraen a un exiguo círculo de experimentos que por fuerza ha de resultar árido, monótono. . .” Ibid., 55-56.

¹⁷⁷ “Pero ha llegado un momento en que toda imagen re-presentativa es forzosamente una repetición y, por consecuencia, carece de todo valor. Así, lo que ayer fue fecundo y fue en determinadas circunstancias factor de renovación estética, hoy es sólo reacción.” Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁷⁸ Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁷⁹ “. . . la concepción polidimensional o el sentido del eternismo.” Bayley, , [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁸⁰ “. . .Comunión. Poesía del contrato social.” *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁸¹ “Ya que se contrae el mundo gracias a la telecomunicación, lo tenemos que ensanchar por la invención. El papel de la invención es cada día mas importante. La invención debe ser incesante. Se adeudará a los demás esa invención que no se realizó. Perder tiempo es perder invención. Es un robo que se hace a los que necesitan moverse en tiempos cada vez mas amplios. Repetir un concepto, una manera, una composición de arte es redundar en la redundancia que acorta la vida, que suprime la diversidad de espectáculos que es su única eternidad.” Gómez de la Serna, “Prólogo,” *Ismos*, 15-16.

¹⁸² “La novedad no puede radicar hoy más que en la imagen invención. . . .La imagen invención es intérprete de lo desconocido. Acostumbra al hombre a la libertad.” Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁸³ “Al defender una imagen librada de la necesidad de referirse a objetos ya existentes y proyectarla sobre el porvenir, lo desconocido adquiere un sentido nuevo; nos volvemos familiares con lo más lejano y distinto de nosotros.” Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ John King, *Sur: a study of the Argentine literary journal and its role in the development of a culture, 1931-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 202.

¹⁸⁵ Adolfo Bioy Casares, “La invención de Morel,” *Sur* v. 9 no. 72 (Sep. 1940): 43-71.

¹⁸⁶ Adolfo Bioy Casares, *La invención de Morel* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1940). For page references, I am using a later reprint: Adolfo Bioy Casares, *La invención de Morel* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Emecé, 1953).

¹⁸⁷ ““La invención de Morel” por Adolfo Bioy Casares. \$2.50. Reaccionando contra el concepto actual de la novela psicológica, cuando es opinión común que no pueden inventarse nuevos argumentos, Adolfo Bioy Casares osa demostrar lo contrario en una novela de gran interés y originalidad. Un volumen de “Prosistas de España y América.”” *Sur* v. 9 no. 73 (Oct. 1940): n.p. [advertisement].

¹⁸⁸ “Por otra parte, la novela “psicológica” quiere ser también novela “realista.”: prefiere que olvidemos su carácter de artificio verbal y hace de toda vana presición (o sea lánguida vaguedad) un nuevo toque verosímil. Hay páginas, hay capítulos de Marcel Proust que son inaceptables como invenciones: a los que nos resignamos como a lo insípido y ocioso de cada día. La novela de aventuras, en cambio, no se propone como una transcripción de la realidad: es un objeto artificial que no sufre ninguna parte injustificada.” Jorge Luis Borges, “Prólogo” in *La invención de Morel* by Adolfo Bioy Casares, 12.

¹⁸⁹ “obras de imaginación razonada.” *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁹⁰ Jorge Luis Borges, “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius,” *Sur* (May 1940).

¹⁹¹ Jorge Luis Borges, *El jardín de los senderos que se bifurcan* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur, 1941).

¹⁹² Jorge Luis Borges, *Ficciones (1935-1944.)* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur, 1944).

¹⁹³ “. . .un rigor de ajedrecistas. . .” Borges, “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis, Tertius,” in *El jardín de los senderos que se bifurcan*, 34.

¹⁹⁴ “Se conjetura que este *brave new world* es obra de una sociedad secreta de astrónomos, de biólogos, de ingenieros, de metafísicos, de poetas, de químicos, de algebristas, de moralistas, de pintores, de geómetras...dirigidos por un oscuro hombre de genio. Abundan individuos que dominan estas disciplinas diversas, pero no los capaces de invención y menos aun los capaces de subordinar la invención a un riguroso plan sistemático. Ese plan es tan vasto que la contribución de cada escritor es infestimal.” *Ibid*, 17.

¹⁹⁵ “Al principio se creyó que Tlön era un mero caos, una irresponsable licencia de la imaginación; ahora se sabe que es un cosmos y que las íntimas leyes que lo rigen han sido formuladas, siquiera en modo provisional.” *Ibid*.

¹⁹⁶ “. . .(hechos de un metal que no es de este mundo). . .” *Ibid.*, 32

¹⁹⁷ “una dispersa dinastía de solitarios ha cambiado la faz del mundo.” *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁹⁸ “EL HOMBRE NO HA DE TERMINAR EN LA TIERRA.” Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

¹⁹⁹ “EL ARTE ABSTRACTO englobado como relación de un todo, asegurará la ARMONIA DE LO POLIDIMENSIONAL, SIN NECESIDAD DE ADAPTACIONES PSIQUICAS.” *Ibid*.

²⁰⁰ King, *Sur*, 120.

²⁰¹ Ernesto Sabato, "Las Dos Inmortalidades del Surrealismo." *Correo Literario* (Buenos Aires) (Jan. 15, 1944): 1-2.

²⁰² "Dice Hugnet, a propósito de *Les champs magnetiques*, el primer texto automático: 'Se trataba ante todo de hacer abstracción del talento y de sus pretensiones, de la razón y de toda preocupación, cualquiera que fuese, para abandonarse a una catarata de palabras e imágenes, dejándose llevar por ella vertiginosamente a través del pensamiento libre de toda ligadura lógica. Practicamente era preciso escribir a la mayor velocidad, sin correcciones, sin vueltas atrás, en una palabra: transcribir.'" Ibid., 1.

²⁰³ "El arte. . . es todo lo contrario de la transcripción automática: es manualidad conciente, es creación, no descubrimiento pasivo. Leonardo decía que la pintura es cosa mental." Ibid.

²⁰⁴ "En buena hora el automatismo para despertar la imaginación. Pero inmediatamente recobrarse e incidir sobre él con una alta conciencia artística y cálculos, incluso fríos, pacientemente elaborados y aplicados. Automáticamente devendrá de ellos creación." Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁰⁵ "Telegrams falling I oppose Nazism" is my English translation of the line "Telegramas cayendo yo me opongo al nazismo," which was included in one of the poems that the writer and editor of *Arturo*, Edgar Bayley, contributed to the journal. This chapter addresses the significance of this line. Edgar Bayley, "Estreno Escurre," *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁰⁶ Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde," 67.

²⁰⁷ Murilo Mendes, "Novísimo Orfeo," "Homenaje a Mozart," "La Libertad," "Momentos Puros," "La Operación Plástica," "La Vida Cotidiana." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁰⁸ For a discussion of the second generation of Brazilian Modernism, see John Nist, *The Modernist movement in Brazil: a literary study* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967); Walter Rela, *Medio siglo de poesía brasileña, 1922-1972: modernismo y experimentalismo, noticia y manifiesto* (Montevideo: Instituto de Cultura Uruguai-Brasileiro, 2004).

²⁰⁹ See biographical entry on Mendes in *Sur*, v. 12 no. 96 (Número dedicado a Brasil). In the same issue, see Vinicius de Moraes. "La moderna poesía brasileña," 19-29, and Murilo Mendes, "Lloro del poeta actual," 46-47.

²¹⁰ La noche envuelve las montañas de Salzburg
Las espadas de los dictadores confabulan en las tinieblas.
Recogen las flautas los címbalos los violines
Y embarran el horizonte con los tanques los cañones los paracaídas
. . . .
Fascinado por tu cristal
Que permanece altivo y simple por encima de la matanza
Vengo a confesarte mi fidelidad
Mientras los rayos de los dictadores se baten sobre Europa.

Mendes, "Homenaje a Mozart," *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²¹¹ Edgar Bayley, "Estreno Escurre," "Primer Poema en Ción," "Second Poema en Ción." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. For a succinct but useful study on "invencionismo," see Juan José Ceselli, *Poesía Argentina de Vanguardia: Surrealismo e Invencionismo* (Buenos Aires: Dirección General de Relaciones Culturales–Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1964), 29-31.

²¹² Solsticio de verano sobre este pan huía
Y adentro por cuantos canales rampaba
Que bien bien bien bien
Había en la vejiga material de conversación
Pero el pan migaba y cuic
Hoy estreno hoy edgar
Loturcamonudolantianamente
Bastión tomado por mis tropas saludo
La libertad mandando los panes adelante
Telegramas cayendo yo me opongo al nazismo
Guitarra en bata me roba las botellas de leche
Celebro la decisión de no usar paracaídas
Una histérica savia subvierte la lotería
La eternidad se ha inclinado hacia el perfil del revólver.
Bayley, "Estreno Escurre," *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²¹³ For historical accounts and interpretations of this period, see David Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina: the Nationalist movement, its history and its impact* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Juan José Real, *30 años de historia argentina: acción política y experiencia histórica* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Actualidad, 1962); Mark Falcoff, "Raúl Scalabrini Ortiz and the making of an Argentine Nationalist," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 52, 1 (Feb. 1972): 74-101; Marysa Navarro Gerassi, *Los Nacionalistas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Jorge Alvarez, 1968); Joseph S. Tulchin, "Foreign Policy" in *Prologue to Perón: Argentina in Depression and War, 1930-1943*, edited by Mark Falcoff and Ronald H. Dolkart (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 83-109; Tulio Halperin Dongui, *El revisionismo histórico argentino* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, S.A., 1971); Alfredo Galleti, *La realidad argentina en el siglo XX: la política y los partidos* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961); Mark Falcoff, "Intellectual currents," in *Prologue to Perón: Argentina in Depression and War, 1930-1943*, edited by Mark Falcoff and Ronald H. Dolkart (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 110-135.

²¹⁴ *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (August 24th, 1944): 1.

²¹⁵ See, for example, "París," (p. 9); "Por la noche se realizaron más demostraciones." (p. 8); and "Muchas casas se adornaron con el tricolor francés." (p. 9) in the same issue.

²¹⁶ "Buenos Aires, que recibió con inmensa alegría la noticia de la liberación de París se apresaba ahora a renovar su acrecentado entusiasmo, su amor a un país que ha ocupado siempre un puesto de vanguardia en la lucha por la civilización. . . . Junto a la bandera argentina ondeaba la francesa en muchos balcones, y por todas las calles veíase el rostro gozoso de numerosos transeúntes, que,

con los colores argentinos y franceses en la solapa, pregonaban la causa de su satisfacción: el renacimiento de Francia. Era tanta la alegría en Buenos Aires porque París ha conseguido salir de las sombras que la aprisionaron durante cuarenta años, que el pueblo necesitaba un río donde desbordarse, y éste fue la plaza Francia, donde resonaron una y otra vez las estrofas del Himno Nacional y de la Marsellesa. . .” “Una multitud imponente y fervorosa rindió altísimo homenaje a Francia: Varias horas el inmenso gentío se quedó en la plaza.” *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 25th, 1944): 1.

²¹⁷ Please refer to previous chapter.

²¹⁸ “A pesar de que ‘CORREO LITERARIO’ no será un periódico político, en sus números estará siempre presente la convicción democrática de quienes lo alienten y colaboren en él, la fe activa en el porvenir triunfante de la libertad.

“CORREO LITERARIO” será un periódico abierto a todas las tendencias intelectuales—no es necesario añadir: siempre que sean dignas—proponiéndole no limitar su plano de acción a un sólo círculo por muy correcta que pudiera ser esta posición.” *Correo Literario* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 1 (Nov. 15th, 1943): 1.

²¹⁹ The following articles in *Contrapunto* give an idea of the artistic debates which found a forum in the journal: “Vasily Kandinsky: *Angulo y círculo*.” Reproduced in N.A., “Vasily Kandinsky” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 2 (Jan. 1945): 10; Agosti, Héctor Pablo. “Defensa del Realismo.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 5-6; 15; Raúl Lozza, “Acotación al nuevo realismo.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 11; Guillermo de Torre. “Apollinaire y la gestación de sus poemas.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 12; Apollinaire, Guillaume. “Los Pintores Cubistas.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 12-14; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Tomás Maldonado.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Manuel Espinosa.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 11; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Torres-García.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Antonio Berni.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v.1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 11; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Juan del Prete.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Horacio Butler.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 11; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Norah Borges.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 11; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Emilio Pettoruti.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Francisco De Santo.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Orlando Pierri.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 11; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Enrique Policastro.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Raúl Soldi.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 10; “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Jorge Larco.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 10-11.

²²⁰ “. . . 2. CONTRAPUNTO no es un periódico de política, pero sus redactores y colaboradores, ante el litigio que en el orden universal divide a los hombres en dos bandos precisos—aquellos nazifascistas que reniegan de la cordialidad humana y confiesan apoyarse en un deseo de estructurar el mundo sobre la hostilidad, y aquellos que, desde la derecha a la izquierda mantienen la cordialidad humana y luchan contra el mito hitleriano,—se identifican con las fuerzas

de la democracia suponiendo que su condición de escritores no se restringe sino que se enriquece con una manifiesta posición en este sentido.

4. A cuantos estuvieran de acuerdo con la posición de CONTRAPUNTO, se les invita a colaborar en sus páginas.” “Lo que es y lo que no es,” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1, no. 2 (Jan. 1945): 15.

²²¹ “CONTRAPUNTO se adhiere a la voluntad del pueblo argentino que expresa su profundo deseo de ser dueño de sus derechos constitucionales y gozar del ejercicio pleno de la democracia auténtica. Como hombres de letras, entienden los integrantes de este periódico que su responsabilidad es máxima en esta hora. Sin demagogia, sin compromisos políticos, sin alardes extemporáneos, hacen expresivo su deseo de ciudadanos argentinos que no conciben otro modo de convivencia que el que inspira la libertad, la legalidad, y la justicia. Porque abominan de un pasado próximo de crapula administrativa y perversión política, porque no admiten la dictadura, porque confían en la democracia y el porvenir, unen su voz a las voces de los hombres del pueblo.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 1.

²²² For a discussion about the polarized structure shared by both political and artistic types of writing, see Carlos Mangone and Jorge Warley, *El manifiesto: un género entre el arte y la política* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 1993). See also Michael O’Shaughnessy, Jane Stadlet, *Media and Society: an Introduction* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), chapter 10 “Narrative structures and binary oppositions,” 127-156.

²²³ Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.; Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²²⁴ Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²²⁷ Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²³⁰ Bayley, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²³¹ “El mundo amanece al orden, reinaugura su unidad. El sereno orden de la paz, el deseado regreso del caos.

Frente al ocaso de los déspotas que desataron la barbarie proclamando la decadencia del espíritu en nombre de la muerte y de la fuerza, se alza el sol sobre un mundo desangrado y exhausto. Si, desangrado y exhausto, pero más firme que nunca en su fe por los derechos de la inteligencia, de la igualdad y de la unión fraternal de los pueblos.

.....

Este hombre ha experimentado—allá en Europa en medio del caos desatado; aquí en América con nuestra desgarrada ansiedad de hermanos doloridos—una vez más en el curso de su historia que

los principios inalienables de la razón y de la justicia son el resorte profundo de toda sociedad de hombres civilizados; que los cuerpos hipertrofiados de los sistemas capitalistas de presa, de los pueblos educados para la guerra, de la ambición imperialista caldeada en el fuego y en el hierro, son fenómenos antinaturales.

....

Los ejércitos británicos, soviéticos y norteamericanos han destruído la máquina infernal de Hitler y la sangre victoriosa de los soldados de la victoria ha caído sobre la cabeza victoriosa de los criminales. A aquellos, pues, el homenaje de los hombres libres.”

“Fin del tiempo del desprecio.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 1.

²³² “Luchemos, todos pues, para liberar al mundo, para derrumbar las barreras nacionalistas, para terminar con la codicia, el odio y la intolerancia. Luchemos por un mundo en el que domine la razón, un mundo donde la ciencia y el progreso nos lleven a la felicidad de todos nosotros.” Charles Chaplin, “Hacia un mundo mejor.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 1.

²³³ “. . .en Teherán, quedó sellado el destino del mundo para una era nueva de construcción y reconstrucción, era que abarcará. . .un largo período de libertad sin amenazas, sin peligros de guerras ni de perturbaciones.

De que el mundo entre en un período de paz armoniosa. . . depende el que la civilización se salve y el progreso continúe su marcha. . .una vez derrotado el eje [el mundo está] deseoso de dar la gran batalla por el bienestar y por la cultura.

. . .Se avecina, una vez derrotado el enemigo a muerte de los destinos del género humano, una era de concordia, de evolución creadora, de paz digna y eficaz, de crecimiento de todos los valores que dan grandeza a la vida. . .la proximidad de la victoria aliada es testimonio de que el peor de los opositores a esta ambición, el fascismo, desaparecerá bien pronto de la faz de la tierra.” “Carta Abierta,” *Correo Literario* v. 2 no. 18 (Aug. 1st, 1944): 2.

²³⁴ “¿Qué ola de puerilidad permitió la llegada del fascismo? ¿Qué fuerzas subterráneas emergieron para convertir en posible el sueño de una fantasía folletinesca? ¿Cómo se pudo creer un progreso lo que en realidad era retroceder docenas de siglos?” “Homenaje a los guerrilleros italianos,” *Insvla* v. 2 no. 8 (Fall 1945): 247-248. Quotation from p. 247.

²³⁵ “No analicemos las circunstancias cercanas, ellas no bastan para explicar ese embotamiento de inteligencia y de sensibilidad. El fascismo fue algo más que una reacción de temores; fue el primer campanazo de una incultura triunfante;. . .” *Ibid.*, 248.

²³⁶ “El amor a Francia lo compartimos con todos los pueblos civilizados del orbe . .

Su resurrección nos alegra y nos reanima; sabemos con certeza que con ella resurgirá la Italia ingeniosa y artista, que recuperará su patria la flor de España; los pueblos oprimidos respiraran libertad. . .” “Homenaje a Francia,” *Insvla* v. 2 no. 6 (Spring 1944): 146-147. Quotation from p. 146.

²³⁷ John King notes that the section devoted to “notes” in this issue included a speech by Vargas on Brazil’s entry in the Second World War, in which he exhorted the American continent to stand together against a common threat. King, *Sur*, 197. King refers to “Palabras del presidente del Brasil,” *Sur* v. 12 no. 96 (Sep. 1942), 93-94.

²³⁸ Jorge Luis Borges, "Anotación al 23 de agosto de 1944." *Sur* v. 13 no. 120 (Oct. 1944): 24-26. Quotation from 25-6.

²³⁹ Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo Civilización y Barbarie* (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1990). Sarmiento's *Facundo* was first published in Chile, where Sarmiento had been exiled, in the newspaper *El Progreso*. It appeared in the section of "short novels" (*folletines*) from May 2nd until June 5th, 1845, through twenty-five issues. For citations in this study, I am using the above cited 1990 edition by Ediciones Cátedra. For a useful discussion on Sarmiento's *Facundo*, see Alberto Julián Pérez, *Los dilemas políticos de la cultura letrada: Argentina, Siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Corregidor, 2002), chapter 4.

²⁴⁰ For the reception of *Facundo* see Shumway, *The invention of Argentina* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Diana Sorensen, *Facundo and the construction of Argentine culture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996).

²⁴¹ Sarmiento, *Facundo*, 91.

²⁴² *Ensayo sobre Rosas en el centenario* (1935) and *Vida Política de Rosas* (1941) by Julio Irazusta; *Vida de don Juan Manuel de Rosas* (1940) by Manuel Gálvez; *Defensa y pérdida de nuestra independencia económica* (1943) by José María Rosa; and *San Martín y Rosas* (1943) by Ricardo Font Scurra. Titles cited in Navarro Gerassi, *Los Nacionalistas*, 133-134.

²⁴³ For accounts of historical revisionism, see Navarro Gerassi, *Los Nacionalistas*, and Tulio Halperin Donghi, *El revisionismo histórico argentino*.

²⁴⁴ I compiled this information from World Cat, taking into account publications on and by Sarmiento which appeared in Buenos Aires between 1938 and 1944.

²⁴⁵ Alberto Larrán de Vere, *Sarmiento: el gran civilizador* (Buenos Aires: Atlántida, 1942); Alberto Palcos, *The Pan-American ideals of Sarmiento* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos Juan Porrotti, 1942); Ricardo Levene, *Sarmiento: sociólogo de la realidad americana y argentina* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta López, 1938); Juan Rómulo Fernández, *Sarmiento: semblanza e iconografía* (Buenos Aires: Librería del colegio, 1938); Américo Ghioldi, *Sarmiento: Fundador de la escuela popular* (Buenos Aires: Asociación Liberal Adelante, 1944); Antonio Bucich, *Luchas y rutas de Sarmiento* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos "Maggiolo," 1942); Aníbal Ponce, *Sarmiento: constructor de la nueva Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial "El Ateneo," 1938).

²⁴⁶ Juan Jacobo Bajarlía, *Prohombres de la Argentinidad* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Araujo, 1941).

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 83-89. Quotation from p. 83.

²⁴⁸ "Acabamos de recordar a Sarmiento como apóstol de la cultura. . . . Leemos [este libro] con aquella emocionada admiración que guardamos por su figura, que la estulticia de los reivindicadores de la sangrienta figura de Rosas, pretenden en vano empañar." Gregorio Weinberg, "Descartes, Renán, y Sarmiento." [book review] *Correo Literario* v. 3 no. 35 (May 1st, 1945).

²⁴⁹ “La incompreensión absoluta del espíritu de Sarmiento y de los problemas de su época; la admiración obsecuente y sostenida hacia Rosas. . . convierte a este libro en una fracasada intentona de transformar a nuestro libérrimo, generoso, jocundo, desbordante y genial periodista, estadista de garra, luchador incansable, líder del progreso y de la civilización europea, en un vulgar hombre de autoridad. . .

[Sarmiento] constituye uno de los más seguros ejemplos de fidelidad al progreso, de desprecio por los nacionalismos agresivos, de simpatía por la civilización, de amor a la cultura, de desprecio por las riquezas personales, de odio al caudillismo y a la barbarie.” Luis Gudiño Kramer, “La vida de Sarmiento que firma Manuel Gálvez.” *Contrapunto* v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 13-15. Quotation from p. 13.

²⁵⁰ “su visible inclinación hacia los sistemas antidemocráticos. . .” “Hombre de derecha, católico militante, admirador de Rosas, y orgánicamente incapacitado para oír los rumores del pueblo y estimar sus justos reclamos e ideales. . .” Ibid.

²⁵¹ “Claro que el libro fue terminado en mal momento, fuera de toda oportunidad. Cuando Gálvez comenzó a escribirlo, Sarmiento estaba pasando por un mal momento en el país. Los Font Ezcurra y los Pepe Rosas o los Genta y los Alvarez Prado lo arrancaban de las escuelas o prohibían sus retratos, sus bustos y sus imágenes. Era en octubre de 1942. Pero al concluirlo, en septiembre de 1944, ya se estaba derrumbando el fascismo en el mundo y en nuestro país perdían posiciones sus servidores. Un hijo del escritor, el doctor Gálvez Bunge, ministro de intervención en esta provincia de Santa Fe, debió abandonar su cargo sin poder realizar sus ambiciones totalitarias, y así, otras esperanzas de los ‘nazionalistas’ criollos se derrumbaron. El libro estaba allí, concluído, resplandeciente de exactitudes y de torcidas intenciones, y no faltó quien lo editara con cierto boato.” Ibid.

²⁵² “En el Primitivismo, el hombre, desarmado de razón y espacio ante las fuerzas exteriores. . .no ha podido menos que *representar sus temores*, indecisiones, búsquedas, transformados en supersticiones, magia, signos. . .” Arden Quin, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Italics in original.

²⁵³ “Pero este onirismo puro conduciría a una mayor estupidez aún, ya que su única fuente sería una constante y sistemática evasión, que, analizada caería en una intimidad cerrada, en el enquistamiento de la personalidad. . .” Kosice, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁵⁴ “imágenes de representación, referencias a temores colectivos, a objetos ya existentes. . .” Bayley, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁵⁵ “cálculos, incluso fríos, pacientemente elaborados y aplicados” and “la conciencia ordenándola y depurándola. . .” Arden Quin, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁵⁶ “nos volvemos familiares con lo mas lejano y distinto de nosotros.” Bayley, [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁵⁷ “El Ateneo Popular de La Boca en ocasión del atentado de que se hizo objeto a la estatua que perpetúa la memoria del ilustre civilizador Domingo Faustino Sarmiento en el Parque 3 de

Febrero, expresó su repudio a ese acto de incultura que agravió a la sociedad argentina. Asimismo dispuso asociarse a la celebración del centenario de la primera edición de “Facundo”—obra que tiene cien años de vivencia en la mentalidad americana—. . .” *Pórtico* v. 4 no. 14 (Jun. 1945): 16.

²⁵⁸ “Apareció “La Prensa” cuando nuestro país era una campaña pastoril primitiva con sus ciudades-aldeas, azotado frecuentemente por los vientos tórridos de los excesos de la pasión política y las luchas fraticidas. . . .De esta evolución [La Prensa] fue factor valioso, así como de la asimilación al país de la caudalosa afluencia de extranjeros, contribuyendo a aquel inconfundible estilo argentino de incorporarlos sin xenofobias deprimentes y dejando que en la convivencia prevalecieran las fuerzas espontáneas de la simpatía humana.” “Noticias y comentarios,” *Insvla* v. 2 no. 6 (Spring 1944): 147-148. Quotation from p. 147.

²⁵⁹ “Uno de los artículos de Sarmiento en “El Mercurio” (junio 1842) lleva el siguiente epígrafe: “El escritor no es el hombre de una nación; el filósofo pertenece a todos los países, a sus ojos no hay límites, no hay términos divisorios; la humanidad es y debe ser una gran familia.” Victoria Ocampo, “Defensa de la inteligencia: Con Sarmiento,” *Sur* no. 47 (1938): 7-9. Quotation from p. 8.

²⁶⁰ For discussions of *Sur*’s reputation as a journal that supported foreign culture see King, *Sur*, 4; Lafleur, *Las Revistas Culturales argentinas*, 148-150.

²⁶¹ “Son las condiciones materiales de la sociedad, las que condicionan las superestructuras ideológicas.” “Nadie pensó en subordinar el fenómeno del arte moderno, y sus abstracciones, al proceso de liquidación de una nueva sociedad bajo formas socialistas de producción.” Arden Quin, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁶² “(Lenín dejó subrayada la proposición engeliana de la ‘marcha en espiral’)” Ibid.

²⁶³ “Las condiciones que determinan una evolución en cada época, son materiales.” Kosice, [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

²⁶⁴ Pérez-Barreiro has discussed the explicit pro-Communist statements contained in several publications of the Asociación. See Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde,” 165-217. The exchanges between the Concrete artists and the Argentine Communist Party have been explored by Longoni and Lucena in “De cómo el “júbilo creador” se trastocó en “desfachatez,” 117-125.

²⁶⁵ All the interpretations of the policies of the Argentine Communist party which I have consulted agree with respect to these issues. See Jorge Abelardo Ramos, *Breve historia de la izquierda en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1990); Rollie Poppino, *International Communism in Latin America* (New York: The Free Press, 1967); Robert Alexander, *Communism in Latin America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1957); Oscar Arévalo, *El Partido Comunista* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1983); Mario Rapoport, “Argentina,” in *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War*, edited by Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

²⁶⁶ For historical accounts and interpretations of these events, see Real, *30 años de historia argentina*; Tulchin, “Foreign Policy” in *Prologue to Perón*; Galleti, *La realidad argentina en el siglo XX: la política y los partidos*.

²⁶⁷ “Ésto une al Pueblo Argentino:

Toda la opinión pública del país se siente unida por los siguientes reclamos en torno a los cuales se organiza la lucha democrática y hace progresos la unión nacional:

1. Convocatoria inmediata a elecciones generales bajo la égida de la ley Saenz Peña.

...

3. Eliminación de toda candidatura oficial.

...

5.. Libertad de todos los presos democráticos, retorno de los exiliados y amplia amnistía para todos los militares y civiles procesados.

6. Libertad de acción de todos los partidos políticos, de los sindicatos obreros y de diversas manifestaciones del pensamiento y la actividad democrática.”

Orientación (Buenos Aires) v. 10 (Aug. 15, 1945): 1.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁶⁹ “Contó con unánime candor popular y democrático el gran acto de homenaje al gran Sanjuanino que se llevó a cabo en las horas de la tarde del día de ayer. La recordación de Sarmiento tuvo la adhesión de centenares de entidades y el concurso de todos los partidos democráticos que dieron al acto no solo un carácter unitario sino también de repudio a las fuerzas del obscurantismo nazi que desde dentro y fuera de los círculos palaciegos, mancharon la memoria del autor de Facundo.

ADHESION COMUNISTA.

El partido comunista envió a la comisión organizadora del acto su adhesión, expresando en esa nota el significado que tiene para la democracia el recuerdo de Domingo Faustino Sarmiento.”

Orientación (Buenos Aires) v. 10 (Sept. 12, 1945): 6.

²⁷⁰ For a discussion about the use of pseudonyms and invented members in the Madí group, see Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde,” 201-203.

²⁷¹ For an accurate and detailed history of the formation and artistic activities of these groups, as well as a discussion of the problems in dealing with the documents and the works produced by these artists, see Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine avant-garde,” 83-238.

²⁷² The literature on Peronism is abundant. For a bibliographical essay of the interpretations of Peronism, see Mariano Plotkin, “Perón y el Peronismo: un ensayo bibliográfico,” http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/II_1/plotkin.htm.

The following sources have informed my general interpretation of the Peronist phenomenon: on political events and economic policies, see David Rock, “Argentina, 1930-1946,” and “Argentina since 1946,” *The Cambridge History of Latin America*. v. 8: *Latin America since 1930: Spanish and South America*, edited by Leslie Bethel (Cambridge (England); NY: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 3-93; Galletti, *La política y los partidos*; Real; *30 Años de Historia Argentina: acción política y experiencia histórica*. On Perón and the military, see Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina*. On Perón and foreign policy, see Falcoff and Dolkart, *Prologue to Perón*. On Perón and culture, see Juan José Sebrelli and Dalmiro Sáenz. “¿Existió una cultura peronista?” *La Maga* (April 10, 2003) <http://www.lamaga.com.ar/www/area2/pg_notas.asp?i_notas=3536>; Alberto Ciria. *Política y cultura popular: la Argentina peronista, 1946-1955* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor, 1983). On Peronist ideology, see Juan José Sebrelli. *Los deseos imaginarios del*

Peronismo (Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1983). On the reception of Peronism by the Argentine population, see Félix Luna, *Perón y su tiempo. Tomo 1: La Argentina era una fiesta* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1987); Carlos Fayt, *Naturaleza del Peronismo* (Buenos Aires: Viracocha, 1967).

²⁷³ Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde," 22-45.

²⁷⁴ Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, 121.

²⁷⁵ Andrea Giunta, *Vanguardia, internacionalismo y política*, chapter 1, "El arte moderno en los márgenes del Peronismo," 46-83.

²⁷⁶ I use the term "Peronist phenomenon" to suggest an all-encompassing notion, which includes Peronist rhetoric and propaganda, the policies of the Peronist government, the actual effects of these policies, and the reception of Peronism by various societal groups.

²⁷⁷ "Sabemos quienes están contra nosotros; y nos alegra. . . están, finalmente, los gordezuelos angustiados de la Subsecretaría de Cultura, trepadores de la culpa cristiana, que odian nuestro arte por jubiloso, claro y constructivo." Tomás Maldonado, "Los artistas concretos, el "realismo" y "la realidad." *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 10.

²⁷⁸ "El último envío a la Bienal de Venecia ha significado para la Argentina una rotunda negación a los nuevos valores. Invitamos a las autoridades competentes a detenerse en la verdadera corriente de la plástica actual y en los envíos que hoy nos retroceden en medio siglo." "Aquí Madí," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 6 (1952): n.p.

²⁷⁹ Andrés Avellaneda, *El habla de la ideología: modos de réplica literaria en la Argentina contemporánea* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1983), 77-92.

²⁸⁰ Avellaneda, *El habla de la ideología*, 40-54.

²⁸¹ King, *Sur*, 145-150.

²⁸² Andrea Giunta, "Nacionales y Populares: los salones del peronismo," 167-168.

²⁸³ Federico Neiburg, *Los intelectuales y la invención del Peronismo: estudios de antropología social y cultural* (Buenos Aires: Alianza Editorial, 1998), 162-182. Oscar Terán, "Imago Mundi: de la universidad de las sombras a la universidad del relevo." *Punto de Vista* (Buenos Aires) no. 33 (Sept.-Dec. 1988): 3-7.

²⁸⁴ See Edgar Bayley, "Sobre Arte Concreto," *Orientación* (Feb. 20, 1946). Reprinted in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 160-161. The Manifiesto Invencionista, the foundational text of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención, also focused its attack on "representational fictions." See Edgar Bayley, Antonio Caraduje, Simón Contreras, Manuel O. Espinosa, Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Obdulio Landi, Raúl Lozza, R. V. D. Lozza, Tomás Maldonado, Alberto Molenberg, Primaldo Mónaco, Oscar Núñez, Lidy Prati, Jorge Souza, Matilde Werbin, "Manifiesto Invencionista," *Revista Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 8.

²⁸⁵ “Contra todo ello se alza Madí, confirmando el deseo fijo, absorbente del hombre de inventar y construir objetos dentro de los valores absolutos de lo eterno; junto a la humanidad en su lucha por la construcción de una nueva sociedad sin clases, que libere la energía y domine el espacio y el tiempo en todos sus sentidos y la materia hasta sus últimas consecuencias.” “... Del Manifiesto de la Escuela,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

²⁸⁶ Rhod Rothfuss, “El marco: un problema de plástica actual,” n.p.

²⁸⁷ “MIENTRAS HAYA UNA FIGURA SOBRE UN FONDO, ILUSORIAMENTE EXHIBIDA, HABRA REPRESENTACION.” Tomás Maldonado, “Lo abstracto y lo concreto en el arte moderno.” *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 5-7. Quotation from p. 5.

²⁸⁸ “La suposición de un cambio, las innumerables posibilidades de su variación estética, de su mutación, de sus ángulos previstos a voluntad, hacen de ella además de un ente observado, un instrumento lúdico como función anexa.” Gyula Kosice, “Escultura Madí.” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

²⁸⁹ Macloide: Cuesta arriba. / Declive para insinuar el suelo.

Meril: Secuestro de centímetros llanos. / Oposición y resistencia Madicional.

Miogüe: Reseña de acontecimientos en que tuvieron participación los autores de grandes respuestas.

Molois: Sitio donde se recaudan los más variados adjetivos. / Fam. Insulto.

Musver: Se dice de la manera de enfocar en fotografía al vivísimo resplandor de un recuerdo de infancia. / Fijación.

Macichud: Línea de sombra que emite un desprendimiento de haces grises.

N

Nandy: Arreglo para un nuevo cuño personal.

Nem-Er: Record de instancias.

Nigs: Abertura que se deja para que emigre el racimo de polvo encantado.

Novoh: Batida que ejerce la autoridad ribereña para aprender el dictámen costero.

“Suplemento para el diccionario Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

²⁹⁰ Diyi Laañ, “La batalla de Inod” and “Tiagno,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (1947): n.p.

²⁹¹ For studies on Perón’s speeches, see Eliseo Verón, “La palabra adversativa: observaciones sobre la enunciación política,” in Eliseo Verón, et. al., *El Discurso Político: lenguajes y acontecimientos*. 1st. Edition (Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1987); Silvia Sigal and Eliseo Verón, *Perón o muerte: los fundamentos discursivos del fenómeno peronista* (Buenos Aires: Legasa, 1986); Plotkin, Mariano. *Mañana es San Perón: propaganda, rituales políticos y educación en el régimen peronista (1946-1955)* (Buenos Aires: Ariel Historia Argentina, 1993).

²⁹² “mis queridos descamisados.” Text of Perón’s speech, delivered on October 17th, 1946, from the balcony of Casa Rosada. Printed in *17 de Octubre* (Secretaría de Prensa y Difusión, ca. 1947), 24-29. Quotation from p. 25. Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan Domingo Perón, Buenos Aires.

²⁹³ “Por eso, el 17 de octubre será para todos los tiempos el Día de los Descamisados”, el día de los que tienen hambre y sed de justicia.” *Ibid.*, 25.

“Como este gobierno es de los descamisados, quiero hacerles todos los años estas tres preguntas. . . .” Ibid., 26.

²⁹⁴ “Yo no quiero mandar sobre los hombres sino sobre sus corazones, porque el mío late al unísono con el de cada descamisado, al que interpreto y amo por sobre todas las cosas.” Ibid., 29.

²⁹⁵ “Guardo el honroso y sagrado uniforme que me entregó la Patria para vestir la casaca de civil y confundirme con esa masa sufriente y sudorosa que elabora la grandeza de la Patria.” Text of Perón’s speech, delivered on October 17th, 1945, in Plaza de Mayo. Printed in *17 de Octubre*, 17-23. Quotation from p. 17.

²⁹⁶ “Y doy también el primer abrazo a esta masa grandiosa. . .” Ibid.

²⁹⁷ “Por esto, señores, quiero en esta oportunidad como simple ciudadano, mezclado en esta masa sudorosa, estrecharlos profundamente contra mi corazón como lo podría hacer con mi madre.” Ibid.

²⁹⁸ “Recuerden y mantengan grabado el lema: de casa al trabajo y del trabajo a casa, y con eso venceremos.” Text of speech delivered by Perón on October 10th, from the building of the Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión. Printed in *17 de Octubre*, 10-12. Quotation from p. 12.

²⁹⁹ “En el afiche de difusión de la CNAOP, el libro y el engranaje que se exhiben como los atributos característicos del trabajador, refieren a los fines perseguidos por el proyecto educativo renovador que proponía la formación integral del obrero, prioritariamente en el campo técnico, pero que incluía también la instrucción política y cultural a través de un currículo que combinaba la historia del gremialismo con los rudimentos del derecho laboral.” Marcela Gené, *Un mundo feliz. Imágenes de los trabajadores en el primer peronismo. 1946-1955* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005), 89.

³⁰⁰ For an informed analysis of the origins and meanings of “Día de la Raza” in Argentina and other Latin American countries, see Ilan Rachum, “Origins and Historical Significance of Día de la Raza,” *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* no. 76 (Apr. 2004): 61-81.

³⁰¹ For Perón’s conception of corporativism, see Juan Domingo Perón, *La Comunidad Organizada* [1949] (Buenos Aires: Adrifer Libros, 2001).

³⁰² For the policies of public housing before, during, and after Perón’s rule, see Anahí Ballent, “Las estéticas de la política: Arquitectura y ciudad. El peronismo en Buenos Aires 1946-1955” in *V Jornadas de Teoría e Historia de las Artes: Arte y Poder* (Buenos Aires: CAIA, 1993), 116-125; Anahí Ballent, “Viviendas de Interés Social,” in Anahí Ballent, et. al., *Materiales para la historia de la arquitectura, el hábitat, y la ciudad en la Argentina* (La Plata: Universidad Nacional de la Plata, 1996), 228-230; Anahí Ballent, *Las huellas de la política: vivienda, ciudad, peronismo en Buenos Aires, 1943-1955* (Bernal: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2005), 55-95.

³⁰³ For the associations and meanings of these houses, see Ballent, “Las estéticas de la política,” and Ballent, *Las huellas de la política*, 101-107.

³⁰⁴ For specific details about Perón's use and expropriation of the mass media, see Pablo Sirvén, *Perón y los medios de comunicación, 1943-1955* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de America Latina, 1984); Aníbal Ford, Jorge B. Rivera, and Eduardo Romano, *Medios de comunicación y cultura popular* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1985); Carlos Ulanovsky and Marta Melkin, *Días de radio: historia de la radio argentina* (Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe, 1995).

³⁰⁵ Information provided in Gené, *Un mundo feliz*, 38-40, 69. The information about the Dirección de Festejos y Ornamentaciones appears in pp. 39-40 of an earlier version of Gené's book, published as www.udesa.edu.ar/files/UAHumanidades/DT/DT24%20-%20MARCELA%20GENÉ.PDF -

³⁰⁶ See footnote 10 in chapter 1.

³⁰⁷ Gyula Kosice claims to have commissioned Grete Stern to do this photomontage. Kosice, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004). The work was published in *Arte Madi Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

³⁰⁸ Bayley, "Sobre Arte Concreto," 160-61.

³⁰⁹ "Me parece que lo interesante es hacer un Monumento que sea profundamente evocativo por la simple razón de que será un monumento eminentemente popular, que en sus formas y concepción debe ser fácilmente interpretado. No debe ser algo complicado sino algo que el pueblo entienda, y el entiende lo que impresiona bien sus sentidos y sus sentimientos. El monumento debe ser simple, y en él debe estar representado el pueblo en su concepción a través de las distintas épocas de nuestra historia. Su figura central debe ser la del descamisado, la que todos conocemos y vemos en la calle, la del descamisado que vimos el 17 de octubre. . . . Hay que hacer un descamisado tan parecido, como sea posible, al verdadero descamisado." Juan Domingo Perón, speech pronounced on July 24th, 1947. Fragments reprinted in brochure *17 de Octubre*, 32. The Monument to the Shirtless Worker, which would occupy a central intersection in Buenos Aires, Avenida de Mayo and 9 de julio, was eventually not raised.

³¹⁰ "Como es sabido, el objetivo del peronismo consiste, precisamente, en hacer ciertas concesiones provisorias a algunos sectores obreros, con el propósito premeditado de destruir sus organizaciones independientes de clase y forzarlos a entrar en los sindicatos estatales, que no son más que instrumentos políticos que el Estado totalitario emplea para, luego de consolidarse en el poder, proceder a empeorar las condiciones de vida y de trabajo del pueblo." Victorio Codovilla, *Batir al Nazi-Peronismo para abrir una era de libertad y progreso* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Anteo, 1946), 130.

³¹¹ "Si la revolución francesa terminó con el gobierno de las aristocracias, la revolución rusa termina con el gobierno de las burguesías: empieza el gobierno de las masas populares....Si nosotros no hacemos la revolución pacífica, el pueblo hará la revolución violenta. La solución de este problema hay que llevarla adelante haciendo justicia social a las masas. Ese es el remedio que, al suprimir la causa, suprime también el efecto. Y desde que el mundo es mundo, la obra social no se hace más que de una manera: quitándole al que tiene mucho para darle al que tiene demasiado poco. Es indudable que eso levantará la reacción y la resistencia de estos señores (el empresariado), que son los peores enemigos de su propia felicidad, porque por no dar un 30 por ciento van a perder dentro de varios años, o dentro de varios meses, todo lo que tienen, y además

las orejas.” Quoted in Pablo Giussani, *Montoneros: la soberbia armada* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana Planeta, 1984), 176.

³¹² “Es muy fácil, en efecto, decir que la Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión ha conseguido tal mejora para tal o cual sector obrero; pero lo que interesa saber es si efectivamente se trata de un beneficio *real y estable*, o si se trata de una mejora *ficticia e inestable*.” Codovilla, *Batir al Naziperonismo para abrir una era de libertad y progreso*, 126. Emphasis in original.

³¹³ “Los artistas y escritores del Movimiento Arte Concreto se afilian al Partido Comunista. Porque el P. Comunista es una fuerza nacional al servicio del bienestar, la libertad, y el desarrollo cultural de nuestro pueblo; porque ha luchado y lucha a diario, abnegada e inteligentemente, contra las tendencias regresivas que envilecen la existencia humana y traban su desenvolvimiento físico y espiritual; porque el pensamiento Marxista-Leninista que el PC practica, exalta a la grandeza del hombre y niega las ficciones que, en todos los campos, lo humillan y lo esterilizan. . .” Edgar Bayley, Manuel Espinosa, Alfredo Hlito, Tomás Maldonado, Aldo Prior, “Artista [*sic.*] adhieren al Comunismo.” *Orientación* v. 10 no. 304 (Sep. 19th, 1945): 6.

³¹⁴ Marcela García Sebastiani, *Los antiperonistas en la Argentina peronista: radicales y socialistas en la política argentina entre 1943 y 1951* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2005), 63-70.

³¹⁵ “Los programas de política social que pretenden deslumbrar con aplicaciones urgentes y sin sentido práctico de la realidad son los que seducen a las masas, siempre necesitadas y ávidas de reformas y que despliegan los políticos inescrupulosos para los fines proselitistas.... El programa que prometió el Duce... sedujo a no pocos trabajadores...le sirvió a su autor para implantar una rígida dictadura ejercida exclusivamente por él que se prolongó casi un cuarto de siglo. El plan de acción del Führer se hizo plesbicitar también por medio de un deslumbrante programa llamado de los 25 puntos... En nuestro país se prepara en estas horas la repetición de la desastrosa experiencia realizada en las dos naciones mencionadas.” *La Prensa* (Jan. 13, 1946). Quoted in Marcela García Sebastiani, *Los antiperonistas en la argentina Peronista*, 68-69.

³¹⁶ Codovilla, *Batir al Naziperonismo para abrir una era de libertad y progreso*, 97-149.

³¹⁷ “1.-Todos los partidos políticos tradicionales;
2.-La parte más conciente y más combativa del movimiento obrero y del campesinado;
3.-Gran parte de la juventud obrera y campesina; La inmensa mayoría de la juventud universitaria, de los intelectuales y artistas, de los profesionales, del profesorado, de los empleados, de las “clases medias;”
4.-Los sectores progresistas de la industria, del comercio, de la agricultura, de la ganadería y de la finanza;
5.-La mayoría del Ejército y de la Marina, y una parte de la Policía;
6.-Los sectores democráticos del catolicismo;
7.-Toda la prensa del país, a excepción de los pasquines peronistas.”
Ibid., 77.

³¹⁸ “Sólo la Democracia Unida y Organizada podrá abatir al Peronismo pro-Fascista.” *Orientación* v. 30 no. 310 (Oct. 24th, 1945): 1.

³¹⁹ The unions continued to recruit new members with official support. The 877,300 workers unionized in 1946 grew to 1,532,900 in 1948. In most urban sectors the rate of unionization climbed by 50 to 70 percent. From 1946, the retirement system was extended to employees and workers in industry and trade, and paid vacations and unemployment compensations were introduced. Another aspect of Perón's practice of "social justice" was the granting of social benefits and even gifts to the poorest sectors of the population. From her office in the Ministry of Labor, Evita, Perón's wife, created a network of social and health services for the urban subproletariat and the poorest classes in the provinces. The Eva Perón Foundation extended its activities to every corner of the country with shipments of sewing machines, bicycles and soccer balls. Another aspect of Perón's protectionist and paternalist policies was the nationalization of public services (railroads, telephones, merchant marine, airlines, gasoline). The objectives of Perón economic policies were to expand public spending by giving the state a stronger role in production and distribution; the change in relative prices to encourage a more egalitarian distribution of national income; and the progressive accumulation of a system of incentives that rewarded activities oriented towards the internal market and discouraged production destined for international markets. These policies resulted in a progressive extension of state activity and caused a leap of around 30 percent in public spending. Rock, "Argentina since 1946," in *The Cambridge History of Latin America*. v. 8: *Latin America since 1930: Spanish and South America*, 73-93.

³²⁰ Luna, Félix. *Perón y su tiempo. Tomo 1: La Argentina era una fiesta*.

³²¹ Rock, "Argentina since 1946," 79.

³²² *Ibid.*, 73-93.

³²³ For a discussion about the expulsion of Maldonado and other artists from the Argentine Communist Party in 1948, see Longoni and Lucena, "De cómo el "júbilo creador" se convirtió en "desfachatez," 126-127.

³²⁴ See announcement in Kosice, *Arte Madí*, 49.

³²⁵ Brughetti, Romualdo. "Un mundo más puro y sencillo: el arte abstracto en la Argentina." *Cabalgata* vo. 1 no. 5 (10 Dec. 1946): 6.

³²⁶ For a discussion of Altamira: Escuela Libre de Artes Plásticas, see Andrea Giunta, "Crónica de posguerra: Lucio Fontana en Buenos Aires." 72-87.

³²⁷ "Cada profesor tendrá la más amplia libertad para la organización de la enseñanza en el taller a su cargo", conviniendo sin embargo en facilitar "de toda manera posible el trabajo directo con el alumno"—he ahí nuestro programa común por ahora. Puesto que se trata de una experiencia, no podemos restringir ni limitar el impulso didáctico de cada uno." Jorge Romero Brest, "Altamira: Escuela Libre de Artes Plásticas," *Saber Vivir* v. 6 no. 61 (1946): 50-51. Quotation from p. 50.

³²⁸ "...enseñar es "formar" explorando aptitudes, no imponiendo fórmulas. . .;" "...la maestría de la mano, por esencial que sea, no puede ser sino resultante del espíritu. . ." *Ibid.*, 51.

³²⁹ "...libertad del espíritu. . ." *Ibid.*

³³⁰ For biographical information on Fontana, see “Cronología Biográfica,” in *Lucio Fontana: Obras Maestras de la Fundación Lucio Fontana de Milán*, 104-110; on Pettoruti, see Florencia Battiti and Cristina Rossi, “Biografías de los Artistas,” *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 216-217; on Romero Brest, see Andrea Giunta, “Presentación Biográfica,” in *Jorge Romero Brest, Escritos I (1928-1939)* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Buenos Aires, 2004), 39-41.

³³¹ For discussions about the changes in education during the Peronist period, see Adriana Puiggrós y Jorge Luis Bernetti. *Peronismo: cultura política y educación, 1945-1955* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Galerna, 1993); Carlos Mangone y Jorge Warley. *Universidad y peronismo* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1984); Daniel Cano, *La educación superior en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial FLACSO/GEL, 1989); María Calderari y Martín Marcos. “Fundación y refundación de la Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo (1947-1966).” *Contextos. 50 años de la FADU-UBA*. Buenos Aires, FADU-UBA (Octubre de 1997): 12-18.

³³² Describing these acts, the second issue of *Arte Madí Universal* stated that on August 2nd, 1948, “a performance of contemporary music was organized by E. [Esteban] Eitler. Works by Bartok, Lopatnicoff, Schüler, Eitler, Maturana, Santoro, and Haba were played.”

³³³ Raúl Larra comments that: “En el acta Fundacional donde se aclara que “por propia iniciativa, Barletta invita a constituir la entidad,” se establece: “realizar experiencias de teatro moderno para salvar al envilecido arte teatral y llevar a las masas el arte en general, con el objeto de propender a la elevación espiritual de nuestro pueblo.” Raúl Larra, *Leónidas Barletta, El hombre de la campana* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Conducta, 1978), 72.

³³⁴ For an account of the Teatro del Pueblo and of Barletta, see Larra, *Leónidas Barletta, El hombre de la campana*.

³³⁵ “La sala de Corrientes 1530. . . en 1937 se denominó Teatro del Pueblo, transformándose, desde ese momento, en una auténtica Facultad de Humanidades, entrañablemente popular, sin exámenes de ingreso ni entrega de diplomas, pues los “cursos” que se dictaban eran abiertos y libres, y no concluían nunca. En ella, con capacidad para 1550 espectadores. . . no sólo se ofrecieron espectáculos teatrales y danza, sino también conciertos, exposiciones de variada índole, ciclos de conferencias y se editaron obras de teatro de autores nacionales y una revista: *Conducta*.” Luis Ordaz, “Leonidas Barletta: “hombre de teatro.” <http://www.teatrodelpueblo.org.ar/dramaturgia/ordaz003.htm>

³³⁶ “A pesar de todo ello (o por todo ello, más exactamente), tras la Revolución de 1943, funcionarios reaccionarios se hicieron cargo de la Comuna Municipal porteña y, una de sus primeras tareas fue desalojar a Barletta y a su gente de la sala. . . . Barletta y los suyos defendieron como tigres su teatro, hasta que finalmente sus puertas fueron forzadas por piquetes de policías y bomberos, cargándose en camiones municipales de basura, a granel, cuatro pisos de elementos—trajes, muebles, cuadros, focos, libros, etc—que habían sido utilizados para ofrecer arte y cultura. Como no podía bajar los brazos y entregarse, Barletta se cobijó con su gente en el subsuelo de la Diagonal Norte 943, en cuyo frente, hasta hace muy poco tiempo, había un pequeño cartel que anunciaba: Teatro del Pueblo.” Ibid.

³³⁷ See Romualdo Brughetti, "El Salón Nacional de 1946," *Saber Vivir* no. 66 (1946): 24-29.

³³⁸ See Alvar Nuñez, "XIII Salon de Otoño," *Saber Vivir* (1946): 54.

³³⁹ XXXVIII *Salón Nacional de Artes Plásticas* (Buenos Aires: Subsecretaría de Cultura de la Nación, 1948; Lía Carrea and Marta Traba, "XXXVIII Salón Nacional de Artes Plásticas," *Ver y Estimar* v.2 no. 6 (Sep. 1948): 63-67. Another interesting document is *Algunos Maestros de la Pintura Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Publicación no. 6 de la Subsecretaría de Cultura, 1948).

³⁴⁰ See Jorge Romero Brest, "La pintura de Emilio Pettoruti: ayer y hoy," *Ver y Estimar* v. 2 no. 6 (Sep. 1948): 11-30.

³⁴¹ "ficciones de las cosas." Bayley et. al., "Manifiesto invencionista," 8.

³⁴² "descripción subjetiva, idealista, reaccionaria." "...Del Manifiesto de la escuela," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

³⁴³ See Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, 94-107; Gradowiwczyk and Perazzo, "Abstract art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953," 47-51; Maldonado, "Entrevista" in *Escritos Preulmianos*, 122-123; and Pérez-Barreiro, "The Argentine avant-garde" 273-285. In his account of why the Concrete artists abandoned their ideas of the 1940s, Pérez-Barreiro also discusses the artists' disillusion with Communist ideas and with the formal possibilities of the "coplanal." For a detailed account of the Concrete artists' relations with the Argentine Communist Party, see Longoni and Lucena, "De cómo el 'júbilo creador' se trastocó en 'desfachatez'," 117-128.

³⁴⁴ For the text of this talk, see Ernesto N. Rogers, "Ubicación del arte concreto," *Ciclo* no. 1 (Nov.-Dec. 1948): 39-52.

³⁴⁵ See for example, "Georges Vantongerloo," *Nueva Visión* no. 1 (December 1951): 19; "Vordemberge-Gildewart y el tema de la pureza," *Nueva Visión*, no. 2/3 (January 1953): 12-18; and his thoroughly illustrated book *Max Bill* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Nueva Visión, 1954). For an analysis of *Nueva Visión*, Maria Amalia García, "La ilusión concreta: un recorrido a través de nueva visión. revista de cultura visual, 1951-1957," in *Leer las artes. Las Artes Plásticas en ocho revistas culturales argentinas - 1878-1951* (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires; Facultad de Filosofía y Letras; Instituto de Teoría e Historia del Arte "Julio E. Payró", 2002).

³⁴⁶ Rivera, *Madí y la vanguardia argentina*, 65-66.

³⁴⁷ See Gyula Kosice, "Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 33-35, and the untitled report on the II São Paulo Biennial, in *Arte Madí Universal*, 30-32. Both articles include photographs of Gropius' plans and of Gropius himself.

³⁴⁸ Alfredo Hlito, "Significado y arte concreto," *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (Jan. 1953): 27.

³⁴⁹ Tomás Maldonado, "Actualidad y porvenir del arte concreto," *Nueva Visión* no. 1 (Dec. 1951): 5-8, 12. In this text, Maldonado states that: "Cuanto más se medita acerca de la situación de la

cultura en el actual estado congestivo del mundo, tanto más se comprende la desconcertante puerilidad que implica persistir en las antiguas modalidades teóricas de la “avant-garde”, a saber, manifiestos de tipo polémico, prosas poéticas a modo de manifiestos, aforismos, etc. A este respecto conviene observar que las actitudes que ayer definieron una protesta altiva contra una realidad inadmisibile—los deslumbradores trucos del ingenio, el culto de lo insólito y singular, la desestima jactanciosa del racionalismo—hoy, después del trajín de casi medio siglo, han modificado su sentido originario. Ya no son formas de subversión o de disentimiento, como lo fueron antes, sino de conservación; no de coraje sino de fácil oportunismo.” Quotation from page 5.

³⁵⁰ “hoy, en 1951, los artistas concretos sabemos ya sobremanera que la historia del arte debe seguir desarrollándose después del arte concreto....No cometemos, ni por asomo, el pecado hegeliano.” Ibid., 6.

³⁵¹ “Así, el arte concreto está saturado de ideas que se transmiten sutilmente al expectador. Su “contenido”, que en realidad de eso se trata, exalta el racionalismo y la fe en el poder de la invención estética del hombre; no comunica, como otras manifestaciones, estados morales de renunciamento o de angustia sino de júbilo y voluntad constructiva.” Ibid., 7.

³⁵² “Las nuevas nociones reveladas por la microfísica, por las teorías cosmogónicas y gravíficas han cambiado radicalmente las perspectivas de la sensibilidad humana.” Ibid., 12.

³⁵³ Maldonado writes that “Concrete art is conscious of this process and it does not ignore that, like the art of all times, it is called to fulfil a decisive role in the job of progressively sensitizing [people] to that which is still a challenge for scientific thought.” “El arte concreto es conciente de este proceso y no ignora que, como el arte de todos los tiempos, está llamado a cumplir un papel decisivo en la tarea de hacer progresivamente sensible lo que aún es una osadía del pensamiento científico.” Ibid. 12.

³⁵⁴ “Es que el arte concreto...está llamado a ser el arte social de mañana, pues resulta el único que puede articularse fluídamente con los grandes espacios urbanos a inventarse en el porvenir.” Ibid., 8.

³⁵⁵ See, for example, the following statements by Maldonado, published in “A dónde va la pintura,” *Contrapunto* no. 3 (Apr. 1945). Reprinted in Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos*, 35-36. “I believe that painting is evolving towards the concrete, which dialectically goes beyond the abstract. Abstract art has purified itself in a real, material sense, that is, it has become CONCRETE ART.” (p. 35). “Painting evolves towards the concrete, because it is in this direction that the human spirit in general evolves.” (p. 36) “Creo que la pintura evoluciona hacia lo concreto, superación dialéctica de lo abstracto. El arte abstracto se ha purificado en un sentido real, material, es decir, ha devenido ARTE CONCRETO.” (p. 35) “La pintura evoluciona hacia lo concreto, porque en ese sentido evoluciona el espíritu humano en general.” (p. 36).

³⁵⁶ “densificación y enriquecimiento.” Maldonado, “Actualidad y porvenir del arte concreto,” 6.

³⁵⁷ “El especialista en comunicación visual, por ejemplo, sabe que es responsable (o cómplice) de todo lo que ocurre con los ojos del hombre común. De todo lo que habita en ellos: fantasmas, hipogrifos o certidumbres. Ninguno llega a ignorar que su misión es fabricar ideologías o

participar activamente en su demolición.” Tomás Maldonado, “Problemas actuales de la comunicación,” *Nueva Visión* no. 4 (1953): 21-25. Quotation from p. 24. I have not found an English translation for the Spanish term “*hipogrifos*.” According to the *Diccionario de uso del español de América y España* (Barcelona: Vox, 2002), an “*hipogrifo*” is fantastic animal, half *grifo* and half horse, and a *grifo* is a mythological animal, with the body of a lion and head and wings of an eagle.

³⁵⁸ “De ahí que, en alguna medida, siempre tengan conciencia (buena o mala) de estar operando en el punto neurálgico de la sociedad en que viven.” *Ibid.*, 24.

³⁵⁹ “Se requiere una dosis muy elevada de optimismo o desinterés social para desconocer que la comunicación cotidiana es casi inexistente en la sociedad contemporánea....Hoy, la comunicación, en todos los órdenes, ha sido reemplazada por la charla (Jaspers). La charla no es solo verbal es también visual. La charla se cumple en función de un repertorio reducido de núcleos pseudosignificativos que son repetidos constantemente. De ahí que el grupo de palabras o de imágenes que conserve todavía alguna fuerza original merece siempre la dsconfianza de los usufructuarios de ese régimen expresivo. Es en la cristalización de los núcleos pseudosignificativos donde reside la aparente comunicabilidad de la charla.” *Ibid.*, 22.

³⁶⁰ For an analysis of how Perón’s regime appropriated the celebration of national holidays for propagandistic purposes, see Mariano Plotkin, *Mañana es San Perón: a cultural history of Peronist Argentina* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2003), chapters 3 and 4.

³⁶¹ For an analysis of the contents of *Mundo Peronista* and of government-sponsored cultural productions during the first Peronist period, see Alberto Ciria, *Política y Cultura Popular: La Argentina Peronista, 1944-1955* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor, 1983).

³⁶² Plotkin, *Mañana es San Perón: a cultural history of Peronist Argentina*, 108.

³⁶³ Eva Perón, *La Razón de mi Vida* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Peuser, 1951).

³⁶⁴ Plotkin, *Mañana es San Perón: a cultural history of Peronist Argentina*, 108.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

³⁶⁶ T. M., “Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara,” *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 20.

³⁶⁷ “El propósito, una vez más en el arte contemporáneo, es descargar una imagen de sus significados habituales. En esta ocasión, la imagen elegida es una cara, la cara de Walter Gropius. Valiendose del fotomontaje como procedimiento, Schawinsky desarticula, descompone, distorsiona, la imagen-cara....Toda cultura tiene su cara, sus tics, sus lugares comunes expresivos, en otras palabras, su máscara; pero a toda cultura también, irremisiblemente, le llega el momento de su desenmascaramiento. Ciertas catastrofes semánticas ocurren, aún en las culturas más seguras de sí mismas y en las circunstancias menos previstas. Los significados se desplazan. Algunos mueren; otros se arrastran malheridos y, más tarde, desaparecen. Schawinsky sabe todo esto. Es más: percibe el espacio libre que queda entre la cara y su máscara e irrumpe con humor y desconcertante inventiva artística.” *Ibid.* 20.

³⁶⁸ “En última instancia, los estados explosivos, es decir, los estados de animación intensa provocados por el advenimiento de imágenes nuevas, pueden favorecer la vida comunicativa. La charla trabaja en el sentido opuesto. Reduce la probabilidad de ramificación y aumenta la de terminación. Su objeto es eternizar los “arquetipos inconcientes.” (Bachelard). Maldonado, “Problemas actuales de la comunicación,” 22.

³⁶⁹ Both versions of the Madí manifesto (Kosice’s and Arden Quin’s) mention “Madí architecture” but these mentions are slightly different. Kosice’s version reads “La arquitectura Madísta: ambiente y formas móviles, desplazables.” [“Madí architecture: space and mobile, movable, forms”]. This version was published in “Del Manifiesto de la Escuela,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p. Arden Quin’s version reads “La arquitectura madí: ambiente y formas móviles, y transparencias por donde la mirada huye hacia el horizonte.” [Madí architecture: space and mobile forms, and transparencies through which vision escapes towards the horizon.” This version was published in *Arte Madí: exposición organizada por el Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, 1997), 29-30. Quotation from p. 30. While I am aware of the differences between these texts, such differences do not bear consequences for the purposes of my study.

³⁷⁰ “ambiente y formas móviles, desplazables.” “Del manifiesto de la escuela,” n.p.

³⁷¹ “la vivienda en base a las últimas transformaciones, concluye inevitablemente por rebasar, ella también, su base estática y sus funciones usuales (edificios móviles articulados, que puedan estar suspendidos en el espacio).” Kosice, “Escultura Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

³⁷² Gyula Kosice, “Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 33-35.

³⁷³ “el ritmo, el equilibrio ortogonal, su naturaleza estática, van específicamente pegados a las confrontaciones contemplativas. De ahí la aceptación del individuo con respecto a su permanencia de lugar y tiempo....

Perentoriamente es un quedarse en el sitio, un hábito enraizado en un chorro distancial, y, en el sentido formal y psicológico, es un aferrarse en su trazado, a equivalencias de estructura-plano y estructura-volumen-verticalidad-horizontalidad en pintura y escultura respectivamente.

La arquitectura, que envuelve todos los problemas de orden estético, teórico, técnico, y económico, sigue ese mismo orden preestablecido.

Descansa en escalas que son inamovibles; la aparición de materiales novísimos en la construcción no ha logrado variar en forma apreciable, los ritmos estáticos.

La arquitectura, aunque sus propósitos se basan en encerrar espacios y no en levantar paredes, lucha con la masa estática, el piso y el muro que es su mas palpable objeción.” Ibid. 33.

³⁷⁴ “Pero lo que no ha podido fundamentar Gropius y la “international architecture”, es la persistencia de bloques de edificios que se levantan con pocas variantes en su forma exterior, registro pasivo de ciudades en que la gente vive abarrotada en reducidos departamentos, y en que la ventana, queriendo apoderarse de la fachada, no resuelve técnicamente el porvenir arquitectónico.” Ibid., 34.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

-
- ³⁷⁶ “la función de estructuras ‘for living’, liberadas y de traslación en el espacio.” Ibid., 34.
- ³⁷⁷ “la sagital, la curva y el movimiento,” Ibid., 35.
- ³⁷⁸ “el muro...móvil y transparente;” Ibid., 34.
- ³⁷⁹ “como base sin limite y no la corteza terrestre como único sostén.” Ibid.
- ³⁸⁰ “la vivienda condice exterior e interiormente como obra de arte....” Ibid.
- ³⁸¹ “una búsqueda más apasionada y viable en la conquista de lo inédito.” Ibid., 35.
- ³⁸² See catalog *Kosice*, Buenos Aires, Galería Bonino no. 35 (Sep. 1953). Preface by Juan Bay.
- ³⁸³ Jorge Francisco Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del siglo XX: La construcción de la modernidad* (Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 2003), 206.
- ³⁸⁴ For a stylistic discussion of this period in modern architecture, see Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del Siglo XX*, 166-227.
- ³⁸⁵ Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del siglo XX*, 192-196.
- ³⁸⁶ See “Ficha no. 10: Pabellones “Aycote y Ambrosetti,” in Anahí Ballent, “Las huellas de la política. Arquitectura, vivienda y ciudad en las propuestas del Peronismo: Buenos Aires, 1946-1955.” Ph.D. Diss., (Universidad de Buenos Aires) (2003), 697.
- ³⁸⁷ See “Ficha no. 11: Monoblock “General Belgrano,” in Ballent, “Las huellas de la política,” 701.
- ³⁸⁸ For accounts of Peronist architecture, see Ballent, “Las huellas de la política. Arquitectura, vivienda y ciudad en las propuestas del Peronismo: Buenos Aires, 1946-1955;” Anahí Ballent, “Viviendas de Interés Social.” In *Materiales para la historia de la arquitectura, el hábitat, y la ciudad en la Argentina*, by Anahí Ballent et. al. (La Plata: Universidad Nacional de la Plata, 1996), 228-230; Anahí Ballent, *Las huellas de la política: vivienda, ciudad, peronismo en Buenos Aires, 1943-1955* (Bernal: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2005); Anahí Ballent, “Las estéticas de la política: Arquitectura y ciudad. El peronismo en Buenos Aires 1946-1955,” in *V Jornadas de Teoría e Historia de las Artes: Arte y Poder* (Buenos Aires: CAIA, 1993), 116-25.
- ³⁸⁹ See “Ficha no. 14: Conjunto “17 de Octubre,” (BHN, nombre actual: “General Paz,” Ballent, “Las huellas de la política,” 712.
- ³⁹⁰ “magníficos proyectos, de unidad arquitectónica, para trasladar a tamaño monumental, construcciones para avenidas, aeropuertos, o grandes espacios abiertos.” Juan Bay, preface in *Kosice*, Buenos Aires, Galería Bonino no. 35 (Sep. 1953), n.p.
- ³⁹¹ “llevar al hábitat los mismos problemas que atañen al escultor y al pintor, sin olvidar a la poesía que empapa como un componente vital las potencialidades más palmarias de la vida.” Kosice, “Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición,” 34.

³⁹² María Amalia García, “El diseño de una colección: Tomás Maldonado e Ignacio Pirovano en la representación del arte concreto,” in *Poderes de la Imagen*, IX Jornadas de Teoría e Historia de las Artes, Centro Argentino de Investigadores en Arte (Buenos Aires: CAIA, 2001); María Amalia García, “Diseñando el progreso. Ignacio Pirovano en la promoción y difusión del diseño industrial”, in *IV Jornadas Estudios e Investigaciones* (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Teoría e Historia de las artes “Julio E. Payró”, 2000).

³⁹³ *La Pintura y la Escultura Argentinas de este Siglo* (Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes; Ministerio de Educación, 1952), 37-38 and 53.

³⁹⁴ Andrea Giunta. “Nacionales y populares: los salones del Peronismo,” 176-177; Andrea Giunta, *Vanguardia, internacionalismo, y política: arte argentino en los años 60*, 74.

³⁹⁵ “Juan Zocchi, director del museo Nacional de Bellas Artes y organizador de “La Pintura y la escultura argentina de este siglo” ha hecho llegar dicha exposicion a Chile, Peru y Ecuador.” “Aquí Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 57.

³⁹⁶ One example is Romualdo Brughetti, “Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo.” *Criterio* v. 25 n. 1182 (Feb. 26, 1953): 148-149; “Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo, segunda parte,” *Criterio* v. 26 n. 1183 (Mar. 12, 1953): 188-189; “Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo, tercera parte,” *Criterio* v. 26 n. 1184 (Mar. 26, 1953): 226-229; “Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentina de este siglo : la escultura, cuarta parte,” *Criterio* v. 26 n. 1185 (Apr. 9, 1953): 280-281.

³⁹⁷ “A nuestra selección le ha faltado más unidad, se ha querido abarcar manifestaciones dispares, que si es verdad que existen en profusión y calidad en nuestro extenso ambiente plástico, no por ello merecen nuestra aprobación total.

Se ha restado fuerza en beneficio de su extensión, al incluir a post-cubistas, expresionistas, surrealistas, junto a los concretos, perceptista y madí.

Nuestra posición es naturalmente tendenciosa, y creemos que hubiera correspondido hacer una línea divisoria entre un envío turístico y una verdadera selección de arte no-figurativo. Organizar es limitar.” *Arte Madí Universal* 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 30.

³⁹⁸ “El jurado de la Segunda Bienal del Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo dicernió un premio adquisición a una de las obras expuestas por nuestro secretario de dirección, Alfredo Hlito.... Esta distinción, otorgada a un artista argentino en una exposición internacional donde concurrieron los creadores plásticos de mayor gravitación y trascendencia de casi todos los países del mundo y de las más diversas tendencias estéticas, constituye para nuestro país un motivo de justificada satisfacción.” “Alfredo Hlito: Premio adquisición en la Segunda Bienal de Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo.” *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 47.

³⁹⁹ “El Grupo de Artistas Modernos,” que reúne a los pintores y escultores argentinos de orientación estética mas avanzada, acaba de exponer en el “Museu de Arte Moderna” de Río de Janeiro y en el “Stedelijk Museum” de Amsterdam. En ambos lugares, los sectores más calificados del público, de los artistas, y de la crítica, han estado de acuerdo en reconocer la jerarquía de los trabajos expuestos....nunca una muestra argentina en el exterior ha sido objeto, como en estos dos casos, de acogida más favorable. Este reconocimiento internacional...prueba la

madurez alcanzada en nuestro país por las tendencias mas renovadoras del arte actual, en particular, por las abstractas y concretas, que son las dominantes en el grupo.” “Exposiciones del Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina,” *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 36.

⁴⁰⁰ Giunta, “Nacionales y Populares,” 167.

⁴⁰¹ “El Salón Nacional se convertido en un mito argentino....Hay que enfrentar este mito y combatirlo. Hay que evitar la limitación cada vez mayor de la retina del público, la educación en una pobreza estética, la confusión del arte y moral, el prejuicio reaccionario. Hay que salvar la libertad del color y de la forma.” Carrea and Traba, “XXXVIII Salón Nacional de Artes Plásticas,” 63.

⁴⁰² See, for example, Dawn Ades, “Arte Madí/Arte Concreto-Invención,” 241-45; Nelly Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, chapter 1, “El arte concreto en Europa;” María Luísa Borrás, “Abstracción Geométrica y Arte Madí,” 14-21.

⁴⁰³ Raúl Lozza, “Hacia una música invencionista,” *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 3. “Música Madí” is first mentioned in the 1946 Madí Manifesto and reappeared in several later Madí writings. For the first documented version of the Madí Manifesto, see “. . .Del Manifiesto de la Escuela,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

⁴⁰⁴ Raúl Lozza, “Hacia una música invencionista,” 3. I am grateful to Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro for making this publication available to me.

⁴⁰⁵ I have not been able to find significant biographical information about Matilde Werbin, the inventionist composer that Lozza alludes to in his article “Hacia una música invencionista.” She was a member of the Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención, as her name appeared among those who signed the 1946 manifesto, and her photograph was published in the *Revista de Arte Concreto*. Also in 1946, the critic Juan Jacobo Bajarlía described her inventionist musical compositions in similar terms as Lozza’s. See Juan Jacobo Bajarlía, *Literatura de Vanguardia*, 180-181. Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro’s dissertation also cites an article by Werbin, “Fundamentos para una música elementarista,” published in the single issue of the journal *Contemporánea* in 1948. Matilde Werbin, “Fundamentos para una música elementarista,” *Contemporánea* no. 1 (1948): n.p. Cited in Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine Avant-Garde,” 158.

⁴⁰⁶ “La nueva relación de sonidos en base a la valorización y objetivación del tiempo y vibraciones sonoras, trae como consecuencia la anulación de la frase musical y el rechazo de todo problema relacionado con los acordes.” Lozza, “Hacia una música invencionista,” 3.

⁴⁰⁷ “Entendemos la creación musical como un suceder de relaciones sonoras y no como una subdivisión de frases musicales con su clásico desarrollo. La música invencionista no puede dividirse en partes mediante la frase musical, pues esta impondrá como condición la prioridad de determinados sonidos. Estamos contra la subestimación de un sonido o conjunto de sonidos y reclamamos un paralelismo elementarista. Todo desarrollo de una frase musical impone la aceptación de parte independiente y parte derivadas. La estructura musical invencionista ha de basarse en una sucesión de sonidos paralelos en su valor. Esa nueva relación que se establece recién cuando el elemento sonoro es considerado en su valor real, ha sido la médula vital de la invención musical concreta.” Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ “paralelismo elementarista.” Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Tomás Maldonado, “Lo abstracto y lo concreto en el arte moderno,” 5-7.

⁴¹⁰ In his book about Lozza’s “Perceptismo,” Haber explains that several transitions took place during 1945 and 1946 in Lozza’s oeuvre, including his intuitive experiences with color in the irregular shape. He specifically refers to a certain *Pintura no. 39*—which, from his description, must be the untitled coplanal I am describing—as an intuitive experience in which the artist sought to create relations of visual equilibrium (planarity) with attached (yet separate) colored planes. Abraham Haber, *Raúl Lozza y el Perceptismo: la evolución de la pintura concreta* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Diálogo, 1948), 16-20 and 23-28. Lozza would eventually refine his ideas about equilibrium, introducing a mathematical equation to determine the relations among color, size, and direction. He would name this method “cualimetría.”

⁴¹¹ For biographical information on Esteban Eitler, see Nestor Guerín, “Esteban Eitler, un gran músico olvidado.” *LAMúsica* Latin American Music Center v. 6 no. 2 (Feb. 2004). <http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/lamc/publications/lamusica/vol6.2/E-book.htm>

⁴¹² These activities are recorded in various documents of the Madí group. Eitler appears as a flutist among the musicians mentioned in the invitation to the 1945 exhibition at Grete Stern’s house in Ramos Mejía. Invitation reprinted in Gyula Kosice, *Arte Madí* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1982): 22-23. In p. 21, this book also includes a copy of the 1945 group photograph of the participants in this event. Eitler stands in the back. In *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p., see photograph of the musical event included in the first Madí exhibition at the Instituto Francés de Estudios Superiores in August 1946. A caption accompanying the photograph reads “Musical audition organized by Esteban Eitler. Works played were by E. E. Toch, A. Copland, Margarita Royer, Esteban Eitler, J. C. Paz, Roy Harris, Tansman, Haba, Milhaud, Koellreutter [sic.], Piston. (August 1946).” “Audición de música a cargo de Esteban Eitler. Se ejecutaron obras de E. Toch, A. Copland, Margarita Royer, Esteban Eitler, J. C. Paz, Roy Harris, Tansman, Haba, Milhaud, Koellreutter [sic.], Piston. (Agosto 1946).”

In *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p., see photograph of musical event included in the Madí exhibition at Teatro del Pueblo, on August 2, 1948. The caption accompanying the photograph reads: “Three views of the exhibition and projection that the Madínemisor movement held on August 2nd, 1948 at the Teatro del Pueblo. In these acts, a musical audition of contemporary music was offered, organized by E. Eitler. Works played were by Bartok, Lopatnicoff, Schüler, Eitler, Maturana, Santoro, and Haba.” “Tres aspectos de la muestra y proyección que el movimiento Madínemisor realizó el 2 de agosto de 1948 en el Teatro del Pueblo. En dicho actos [sic.], se ofreció una audición de música contemporánea organizada por E. Eitler. Se ejecutaron obras de Bartok, Lopatnicoff, Schüler, Eitler, Maturana, Santoro y Haba.”

⁴¹³ See Esteban Eitler, “Pieza para piano,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.; Esteban Eitler, “Preludio de las “Cuatro Bagatelas,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.; Esteban Eitler, “Tres poemas madíes, sobre los poemas de Kosice: 1o. Alicience por sorpresa; 2o. Landar en el poema; 3o. Conducto de aliners.” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 3 (Oct. 1949): n.p.

⁴¹⁴ For Eitler's activities in Chile, see Gustavo Becerra Schmidt. "Los años cincuenta en la música de vanguardia en Chile. Impresiones de un compositor, cuarenta años después, como homenaje tardío a Esteban Eitler." *Revista Musical Chilena*, v. 51 no. 187 (Jan. 1997): 45-48.

⁴¹⁵ See entry about Eitler's lectures in Pernambuco, Brasil in "Aquí Madí," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.; entry about Eitler's activities in Chile with Tonus Group in "Aquí Madí," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 57. See also two "Madí drawings" by Esteban Eitler, reproduced in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 6 (Oct. 1952): n.p.

⁴¹⁶ Esteban Eitler, "Preludio de las cuatro bagatelas," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

⁴¹⁷ For a general survey of the history of music, see Jeremy Yudkin, *Understanding Music* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1996).

⁴¹⁸ "El dibujo madí es una disposición de puntos y líneas sobre una superficie." See ". . . Del Manifiesto de la Escuela," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

⁴¹⁹ For biographical information on Koellreutter, see Carlos Haag, "Entrevista de 1977 com Hans Joachin [sic.] Koellreutter." *O Estado de São Paulo* 17/9/2005. Source: http://www.movimento.com/site_movimento/mostraconteudo.asp?mostra=2&escolha=6&codigo=3016

⁴²⁰ "Aquí Madí," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 4 (Oct. 1950): n.p.

⁴²¹ "crítica severa e implacable a nuestra música, la dodecatónica, la cual [Kosice] desearía liberada de cualquier forma de concepción y composición antiguas, reintegrada en su función de arte autónomo y humanizador, ya que la invención es la más importante calidad inherente al hombre. Lo que su audaz y heroico grupo idealiza y procura realizar en sus trabajos, la INVENCION INTEGRAL de la obra artística, he aquí lo que también me parece el fundamento para una nueva realidad del arte."

"Desde que la mayoría de compositores dodecatonistas, so pretexto de "consolidación" y "tradición", trata de reconducir la música hacia fórmulas y normas que caracterizan el arte del pasado, asumiendo así una actitud de reacción negativa frente a la revolución schonbergeriana, me preocupé seriamente con este problema." H. J. Koellreutter, "Carta Abierta," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 4 (Oct. 1950): n.p.

⁴²² On Schönberg, see Brian Simms, *Music of the Twentieth-Century: Style and Structure* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 123-162; Yudkin, *Understanding Music*, 341-345.

⁴²³ Simms, *Music of the Twentieth Century*, 65-66.

⁴²⁴ "su fuerza inventiva, su color jubiloso, se vio diluído en parte por la interferencias de estilo voluntariamente no-controlables. La intromisión de un neo-cubismo y de una representación "abstraída" restaron unidad a la muestra." "Aquí Madí," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.

⁴²⁵ "no buscamos el parecido con nada." Koellreutter, "Carta Abierta," n.p.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ “un arte libre e independiente como expresión del orden y de la ley.” Ibid.

⁴²⁸ In 1950, *Arte Madí Universal* published a photograph of a work by Kosice entitled *Sublínea Espacial Tensionada entre Verde y Gris*. The same work was apparently exhibited under the name of *Planos y Color Liberados* at Kosice’s one-person exhibition at the Bonino gallery in September 1953, and at the II São Paulo Biennial in the same year. See *II Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Museu de Arte Moderna, 1953-54), 68. Another painting of similar principles, *Ecuación de tres planos blancos*, was published in *Arte Madí Universal* in 1951, and was exhibited the following year in the exhibition “La Pintura y la Escultura Argentinas de este siglo,” held at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes. See *La Pintura y la Escultura Argentinas de Este Siglo* (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Educación, Dirección Nacional de Cultura, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1952-53), 56.

⁴²⁹ See Gyula Kosice, “Madí o el arte esencial: en torno a la controversia sobre el arte no figurativo.” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.

⁴³⁰ H. J. Koellreutter, “Un nuevo mundo sonoro: carta a un joven músico.” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.

⁴³¹ “Crear significa inventar algo que antes no existía. La obra de arte, además de ser valiosa, debe presentar algo nuevo, tener su cuño propio y poseer un estilo que la distinga de las creaciones del mundo del pasado. Debe principalmente indicar el camino para el futuro. He aquí en que consiste el único criterio en las artes, el cual debe estar por encima de los conceptos de bello y feo, conceptos relativos y un tanto discutibles.”

“El arte, querido amigo, así como toda la vida social, evoluciona, se renueva constantemente y nunca vuelve para atrás. La figuración [en las artes visuales] pertenece definitivamente al pasado y nada adelanta la guerra al atonalismo, al dodecafonismo o al atematismo.” Koellreutter, “Un nuevo mundo sonoro,” n.p.

⁴³² “En 1948, Schaeffer y un grupo de colaboradores realizaron, gracias a la amplia visión de la Radiodifusión Francesa, una serie de manipulaciones con sonido grabado, consiguiendo extraer de este ruido elementos musicales. Al mismo tiempo, en la Universidad de Bonn, en Alemania, el científico Dr. Meyer-Epple, perfeccionando instrumentos electrónicos, llegó a resultados semejantes. El “Concierto de Ruidos” en París en el mismo año, marcó época. Siguen las primeras composiciones: “Suite 14”, “Sinfonía para un hombre solo”, “Concierto de ambigüedades”, “Música sin título” de Henry Schaeffer; “Estudios sobre un sonido” de Pierre Henry y otras más. Empleando todos los efectos sonoros imaginables e instrumentos electrónicos como Trautonium, Ondas Mantinot, Vodcek y otros, estos compositores coordinan los medios expresivos habituales con nuevos métodos, picado, filtrado, superagudo, supergrave, y otros. Es difícil describir lo que sentí presenciando estas experiencias que revolucionarán el mundo musical. Todo lo que nos cerca—ruidos, palabras, sonidos, efectos sonoros de toda especie producidos por nuevos instrumentos electrónicos, sirve a la construcción sintética de la obra musical.” Koellreutter, “Un nuevo mundo sonoro,” n.p.

⁴³³ About electronic music, see Simms, *Music in the Twentieth Century*, 101-120; Yudkin, *Understanding Music*, 384-408.

⁴³⁴ “incalculable interés” “Aquí Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.

⁴³⁵ “catálogo de la última exposición de Max Bill.” “Aquí Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.

⁴³⁶ Letter from Max Bill (Zürich) to Gyula Kosice (Buenos Aires), 3/25/1949; Letter from Max Bill (Zürich) to Gyula Kosice (Buenos Aires), 4/21/1949. Source: Carpeta Gyula Kosice, Fundación Espigas, Buenos Aires.

⁴³⁷ See the following articles by Juan Carlos Paz: “Arnold Schönberg y el fin de la era tonal,” *Contrapunto* v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945); “Arnold Schönberg y el fin de la era tonal,” *Sur* 186 (April 1950): 74-93; “Arnold Schönberg y el expresionismo sonoro,” *Cabalgata* v. 2 no. 11 (11 Mar. 1947): 9-12; “Música estadounidense de vanguardia,” *Cabalgata* v. 3 no. 16 (Feb. 1948): 1, 10; “Alois Haba, compositor,” *Cabalgata* v. 3 no. 18 (Apr. 1948): 1, 7; “El Forum Group de Nueva York,” *Cabalgata* v. 3 no. 20 (June 1948): 1, 3, 10.

⁴³⁸ For biographical information on Juan Carlos Paz, see *Cartas a J. C. Paz, Selección y traducción de Lucía Maranca* (La Lucila, Pcia. de Buenos Aires, Republica Argentina: Agrupación Nueva Música, 1987), 9-10.

⁴³⁹ Juan Carlos Paz, “Qué es nueva música,” *Nueva Visión* no. 1 (December 1951): 10–11; Juan Carlos Paz, “Música atemática y música microtonal,” *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (January 1953): 28–30.

⁴⁴⁰ Carlos Mendes Mosquera, Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

⁴⁴¹ Paz, “Música atemática and música microtonal,” 28

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Paz, “Música atemática and música microtonal,” 29.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ See photograph showing *Desarrollo de 14 temas*, by Maldonado, as exhibited in the 1952 show *La Pintura y Escultura Argentinas de Este Siglo*, in *La Pintura y Escultura Argentinas de Este Siglo*, 55. In *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (Jan. 1953): 26., see photograph showing *Desarrollo de 14 temas* as displayed in the 1952 exhibition of *Artistas Modernos de la Argentina* in Galería Viau, Buenos Aires.

⁴⁴⁷ Tomás Maldonado, *Max Bill* [1955], reprinted in Tomás Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos*, 101–13 (quotation from p. 106).

⁴⁴⁸ Several writings by Maldonado reveal this preoccupation. The following three have been reprinted in Tomás Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos*: “A dónde va la pintura?” [1945], 35–36;

“Manifiesto Invencionista,” [1946], 39–40; “Los Artistas Concretos, el “Realismo” y la “Realidad” [1946], 49–50.

⁴⁴⁹ Paz, “Música atemática y música microtonal,” 28.

⁴⁵⁰ Such a notion is well established in the literature on Argentine Concrete art. See, for example Perazzo, *El Arte Concreto en la Argentina en la Década del 40*, 97; Gradowczyk and Perazzo, “Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo,” 48 and 51; Pérez-Barreiro, “The Argentine Avant-Garde,” 273–85.

⁴⁵¹ Gradowczyk and Perazzo, “Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata,” 15.

⁴⁵² See, for example, Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, “Buenos Aires,” in *The Geometry of Hope*, 30–37. This perception, in any event, is shared by every scholar and every former Concrete and Madí artist.

⁴⁵³ See, for example, Rock, “Argentina, 1930–1946;” Rock, “Argentina since 1946;” and Navarro-Gerassi, *Los Nacionalistas*.

⁴⁵⁴ “Entrevista a Tomás Maldonado, por Giacinto di Pietrantonio,” 125.

FIGURES

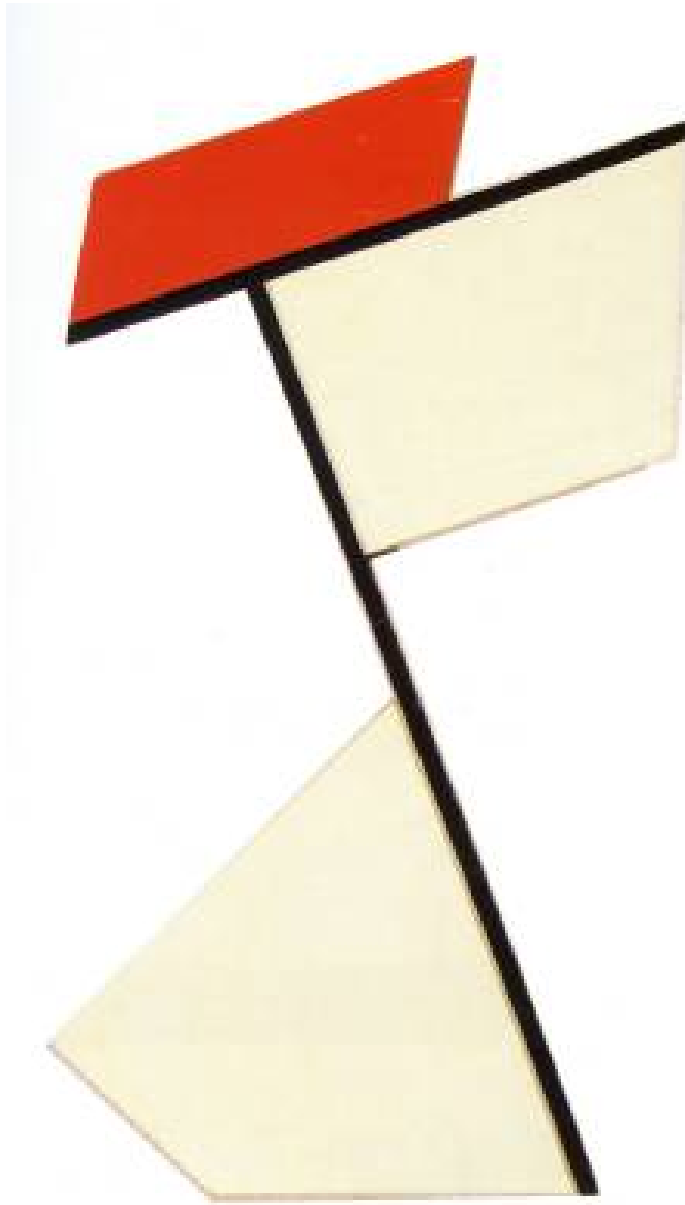


Fig. 1: Lidy Prati, [untitled work], ca. 1946, oil on wood.
Source: *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, cat. 72. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Revista Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 9.



Fig. 2: Attributed to Diyi Laań, [untitled work], ca. 1948, enamel on wood.
Source: *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, cat. 45. Attributed date follows date of
reproduction in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.



Fig. 3: Troiano Troiani, *Promisión*, 1942.
Source: *Forma* no. 22 (Oct. 1942): 3.

Promisión was illustrated in an article by Rodrigo Bonome, President of the SAAP, Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos. (“Manos que se extienden y manos que se esconden,” *Forma* no. 22 (Oct. 1942): 3-4.)

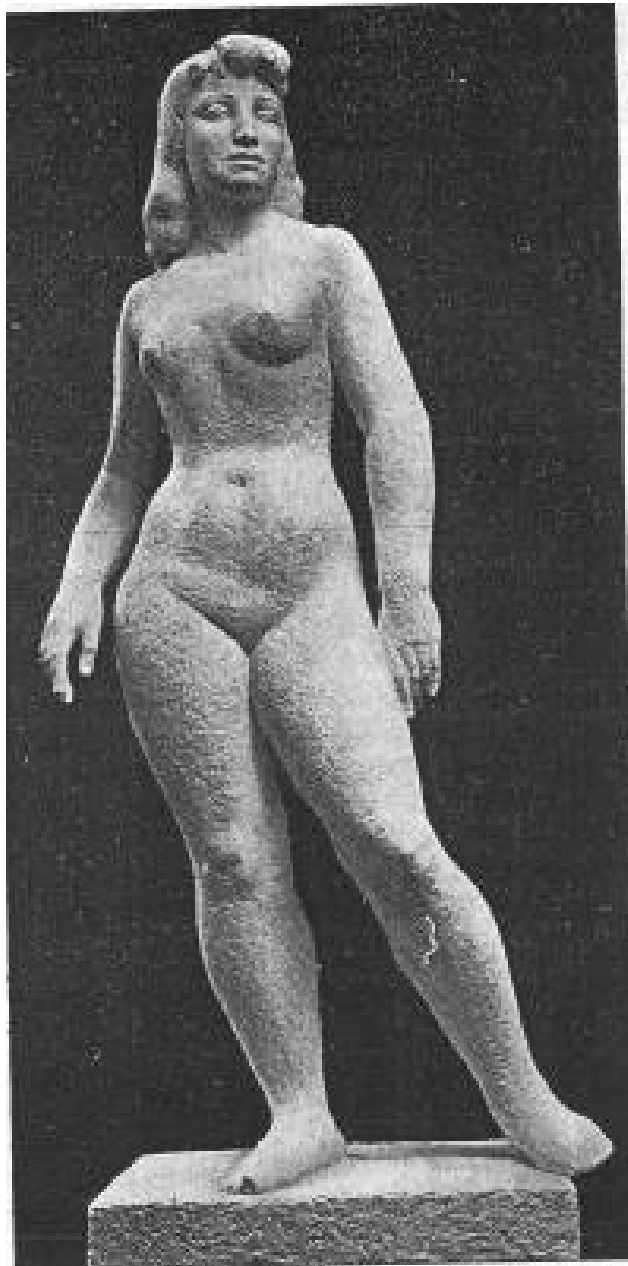


Fig. 4: Alfredo F. Sturla, *Cadencia*, 1942, plaster.
Source: *Forma* no. 22 (Oct. 1942): 7.

Cadencia was winner of the Premio Jockey Club de la Capital in the XXXII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1942. It was illustrated in *Forma* no. 22 and *Anuario Plástica* (1942), 14.



Fig. 5: Raúl Mazza, *El Pintor y la Modelo*, 1942, oil.
Source: *Anuario Plástica* (1942): 14.

El Pintor y la Modelo was winner of the Gran Premio Adquisición, the highest honor in the XXXII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes. It was illustrated in the salon catalog and in *Anuario Plástica* (1942).



Fig. 6: Rodrigo Bonome, *Alrededores del Hospital Piñero*, 1942,
tempera

Source: *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.

Alrededores del Hospital Piñero won First Prize at the Primer Salón
de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires.



Fig. 7: Rodolfo Castagna, *Burritos*, 1942, watercolor
Source: *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.

Burritos won the Primer Premio Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes at the XXVIII Salón de Acuarelistas y Grabadores.



Fig. 8: Augusto Marteau, *Corrientes y Libertad*, 1942.

Source: *Forma* no. 22 (1942): 1.

Corrientes y Libertad was illustrated in the cover of *Forma* no. 22. Works in the same style by the same artist were shown at the important Galería Witcomb in 1942 in Buenos Aires, e.g., *Caracas y Talcahuano*, which was also illustrated in *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.



Fig. 9: Pompeyo Audivert, [untitled work], 1942, woodcut
Source: *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.

This woodcut by Pompeyo Audivert was illustrated as a whole-page plate in *Anuario Plástica* (1942).



Fig. 10: Top: Ramón Gómez Cornet, *Figura de Niña*, oil
 Bottom: Ramón Gómez Cornet, *Figuras (Córdoba)*, oil
 Source: *Anuario Plástica* (1942).

Figura de Niña and *Figuras (Córdoba)* were illustrated in the book *De la Joven Pintura Rioplatense*, by the critic Romualdo Brughetti (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Plástica, 1942). They were also illustrated in the review of this book, published in *Anuario Plástica* (1942).



Fig. 11: Raquel Forner, *El Drama*, 1942, oil on canvas

Source:

http://www.mnba.org.ar/obras_autor.php?autor=125&obra=443&opcion=1

El drama won the Primer Premio Nacional at the XXXII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1942. It was illustrated and commented in the multi-author review of this salon published in *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.. It was also illustrated in the salon's catalog, *XXXII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes*, published by the Comisión Nacional de Cultura, n.p.



Fig. 12: Emilio Pettoruti, *El Timbre*, 1938, oil on canvas
Source: <http://www.biddingtons.com/content/bentleybuenosaires.html>

El Timbre won the Premio Eduardo Sívori in the XXXI Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1941. It was illustrated in Jorge Romero Brest's review of the salon published in *Anuario Plástica* (1941). (Jorge Romero Brest, "El XXXI Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes," *Anuario Plástica* (1941): 12-19. (Illustration on p. 14).

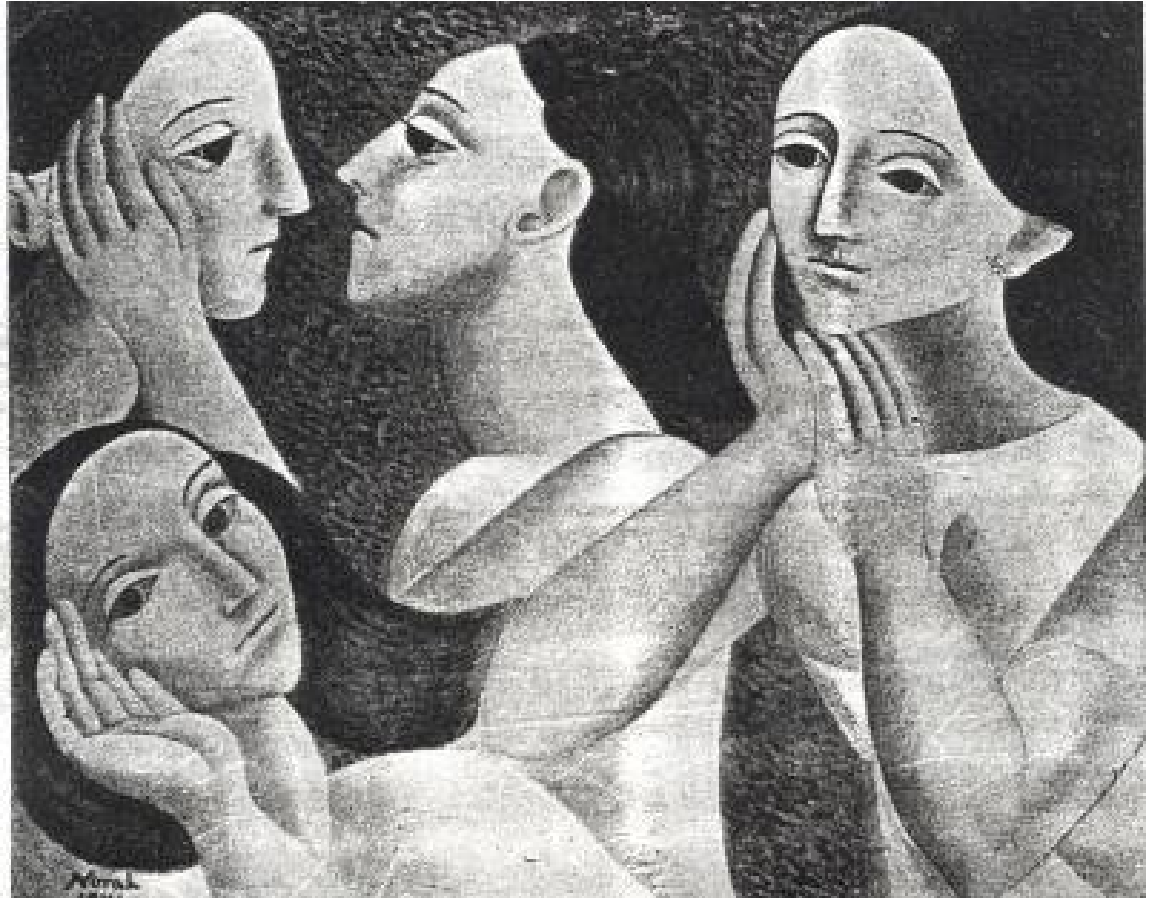


Fig. 13: Norah Borges, *Adolescencia*, 1942, oil
 Source: Romualdo Brughetti, “El Noveno Salón de Otoño y el Primer Salón de Buenos Aires,” *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.

Adolescencia was included in the artist-run Noveno Salón de Otoño de Buenos Aires of 1942. It was illustrated in this salon’s review by the critic Romualdo Brughetti, who praised the work, stating: “Norah Borges de Torre’s painting is defined by refinement of the best quality and by a sensitive and synthetic intelligence.” [“Por un refinamiento de la mejor ley y una inteligencia sensible y sintética se define la pintura de Norah Borges de Torre.”]



Fig. 14: Juan Battle Planas, *El Destino*, 1942

Source: http://www.bapro.com.ar/museo/patrim_pinaco/battle_destino.htm

Juan Battle Planas participated in the artist-run Noveno Salón de Otoño de Buenos Aires of 1942. His contribution was praised by critic Romualdo Brughetti in “El Noveno Salón de Otoño y el Primer Salón de Buenos Aires,” *Anuario Plástica* (1942): n.p.



Fig. 15: Juan del Prete, *Cuatro Figuras en un Paisaje*, 1942, oil on canvas

Source: Squirru, *Juan del Prete*, 34.



Fig. 16: Antonio Berni, *Lily*, 1943, oil on canvas

Source:

http://www.mnba.org.ar/obras_autor.php?autor=25&opcion=1

Lily won the Gran Premio de Honor at the XXXIII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1943.



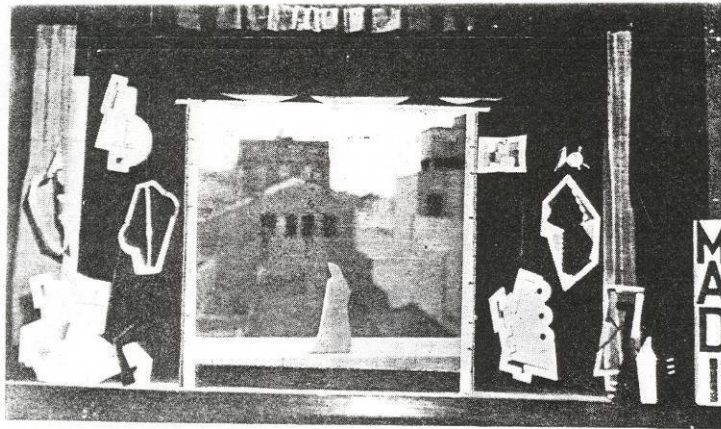
Fig. 17: Antonio Berni, Mural in the cupola of Galerías Pacífico, Buenos Aires, 1945.
Source: *Art from Argentina*, 49.



Fig. 18: Miguel Carlos Victorica, *Cocina Bohemia*, 1941.
Source:

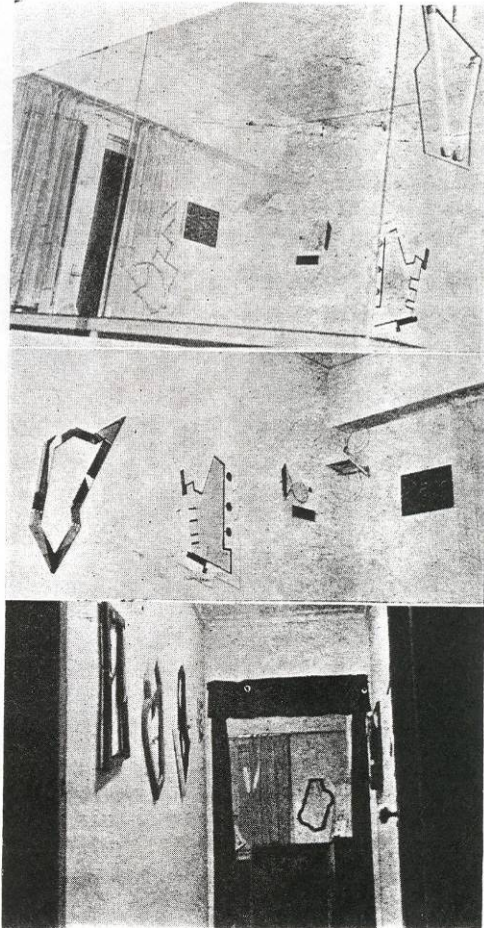
http://www.mnba.org.ar/obras_autor.php?autor=371&opcion=1

Cocina Bohemia won the Gran Premio Nacional in the XXXI Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes. It was illustrated in Jorge Romero Brest's review of the salon published in *Anuario Plástica* (1941). (Jorge Romero Brest, "El XXXI Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes," *Anuario Plástica* (1941): 12-19. (Illustration on p. 14).



Durante el acto realizado en el Teatro del Pueblo se presentó una proyección en color de pinturas, esculturas y poemas mádicos. Participaron en este orden:

ROTHFUSS
URICCHIO
LAAS
BRESLER
DELMONTE
LORIN-KALDOR
RASAS-PET
ESQUIVEL
KOSICE
BIEDMA
HAVAS



EXPOSITION PERMANENTE
PERMANENT EXPOSITION
BESTANDIGE AUSSTELLUNG
EXPOSIZIONE PERMANENTE

El día 22 de agosto se inauguró en la sede de nuestra redacción la sala de exposición permanente que quedó habilitada al público todos los días sábados de 15 a 20 hs.

Fig. 19: Views of various Madí events from 1948.
Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (1948): n.p.

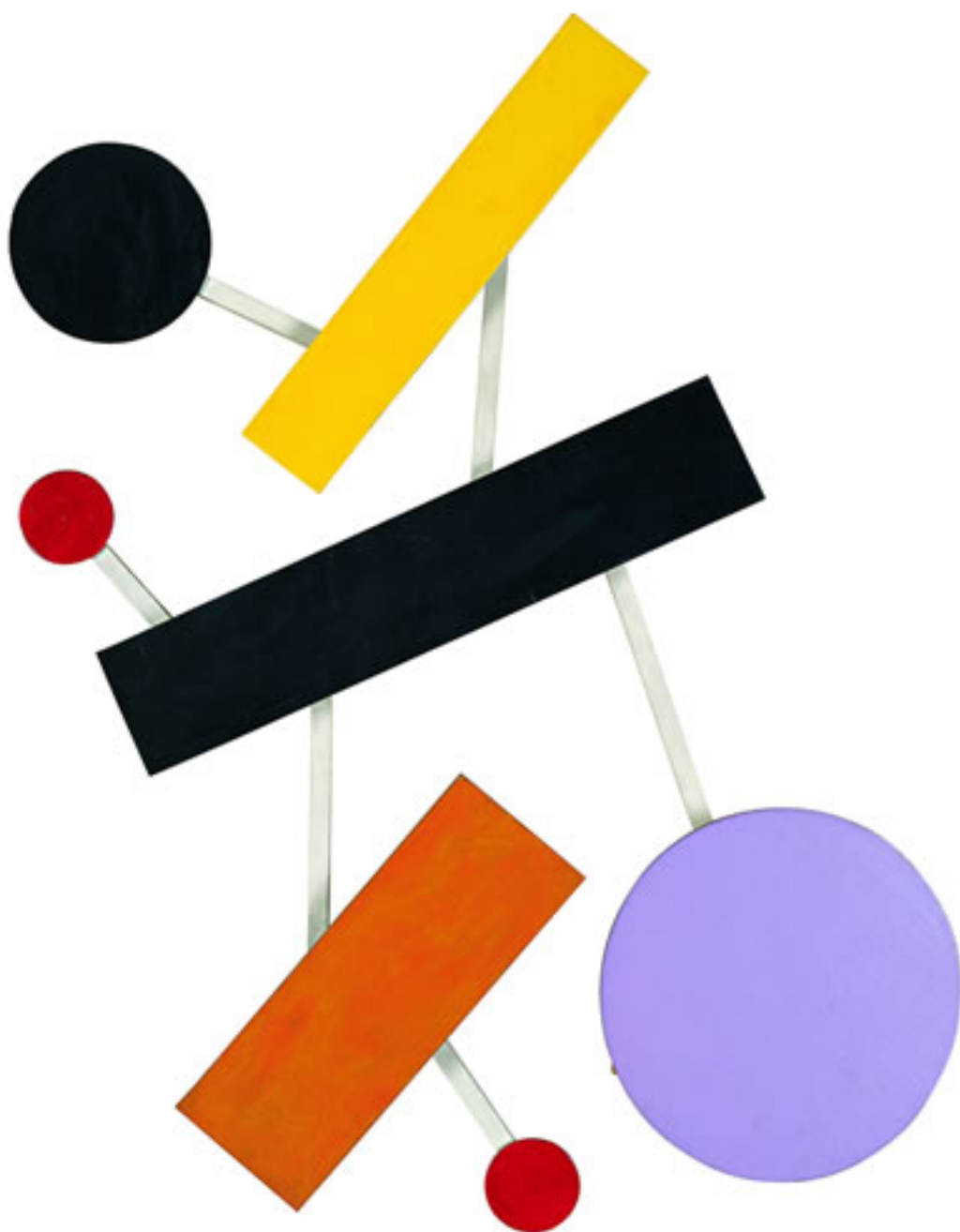


Fig. 20: Diyi Laań, *Pintura Articulada Madí*, 1946, enamel on polished wood
Source: *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, cat. 46.



Fig. 21: Gyula Kosice, *Röyi*, 1945, wood jointed with bolts and wing nuts.

Source: *Inverted Utopias*, 160.



Fig. 22: Juan Melé, *Marco Recortado no. 2*, 1946,
oil on masonite
Source: *The Geometry of Hope*, pl. 6.

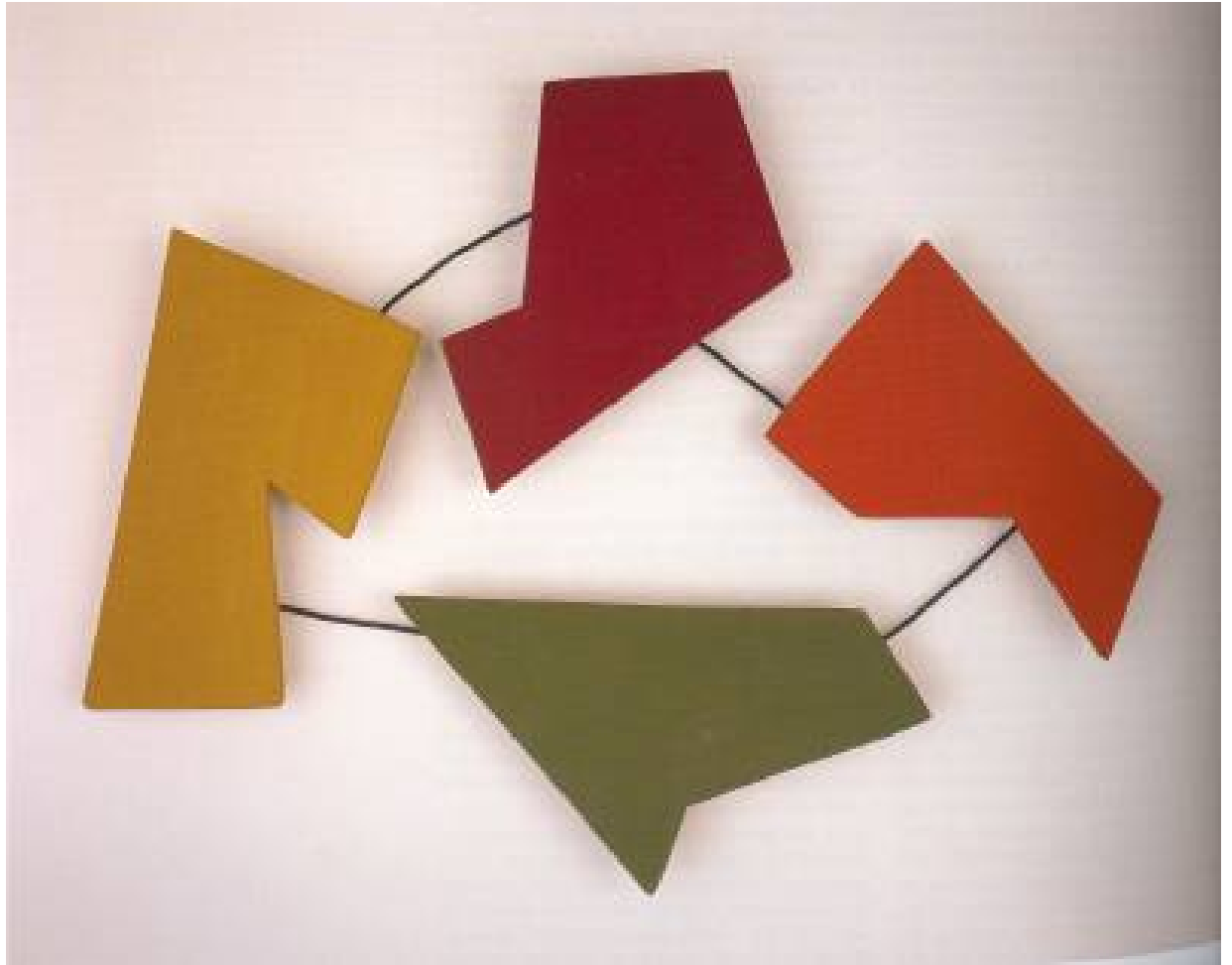


Fig. 23: Raúl Lozza, *Relief*, 1945, casein on wood and painted metal
Source: *The Geometry of Hope*, pl. 4.

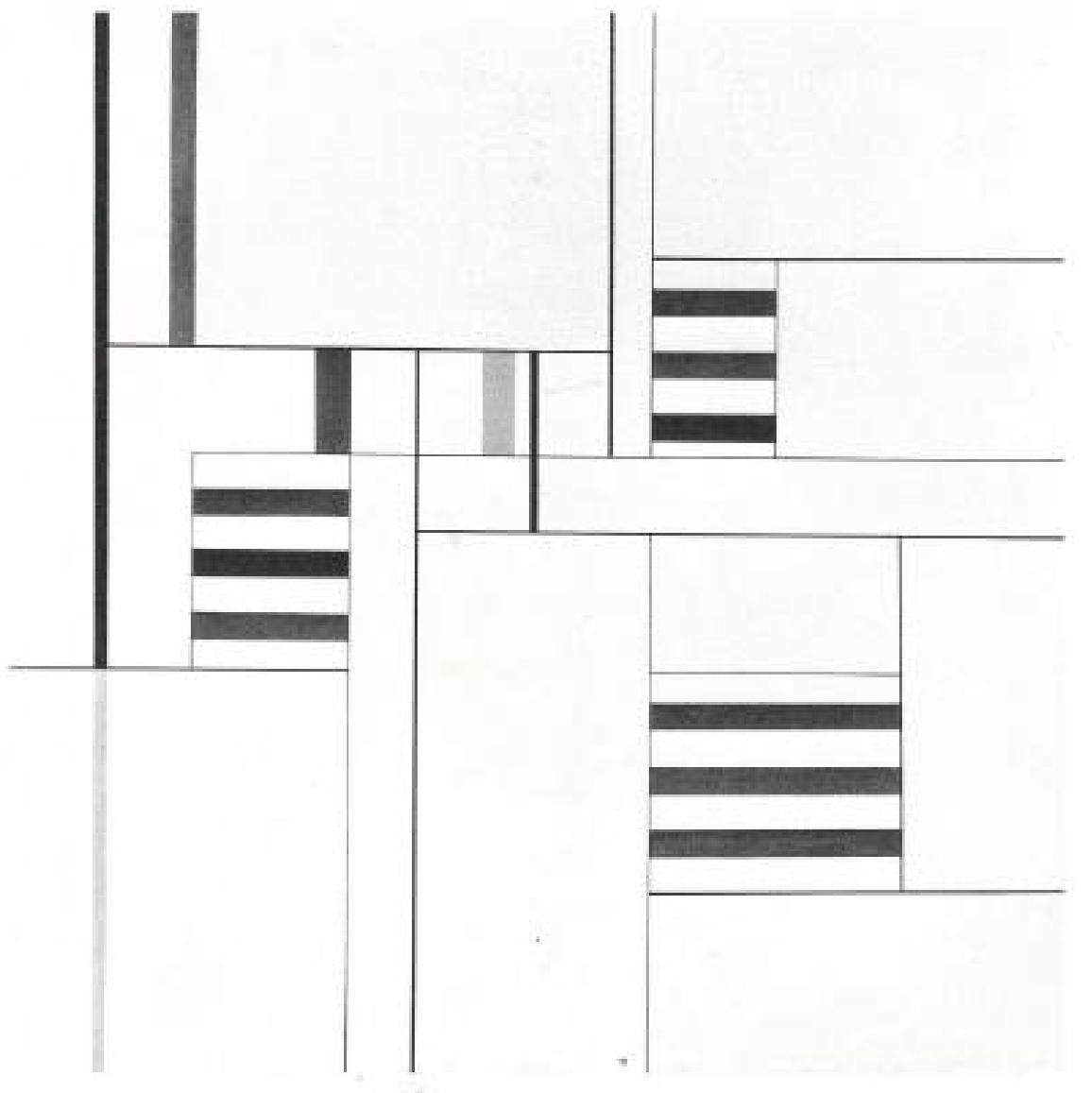


Fig. 24: Alfredo Hlito, *Ritmos Cromáticos III*, 1949, oil on canvas
Source: Hlito, *Obra Pictórica*, 1945-1985, 17.



Fig. 25: Alfredo Hlito, *Espectro o Pintura II*, 1959, oil on canvas
Source: Hlito, *Obra Pictórica 1945-1985*, 31.

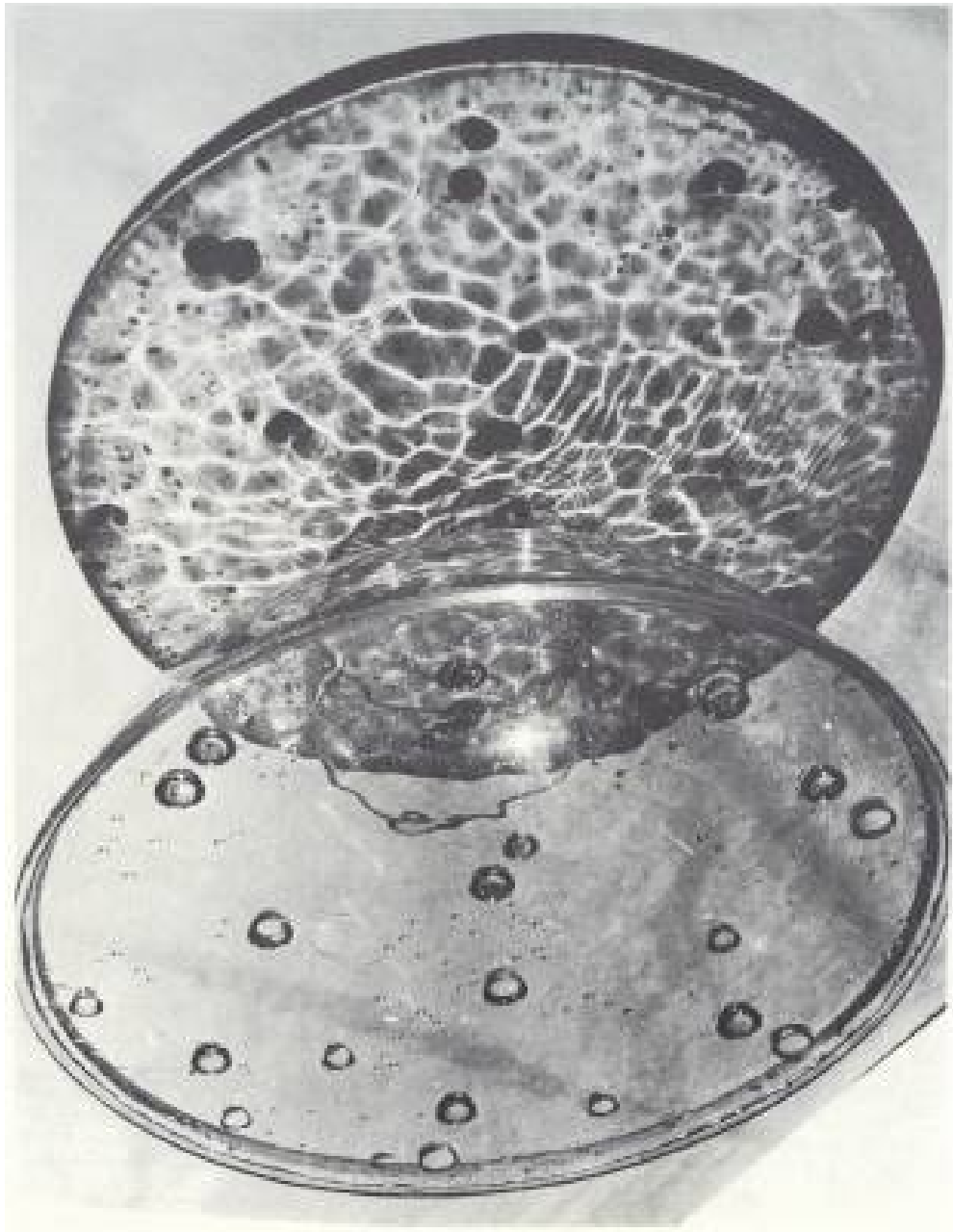


Fig. 26: Gyula Kosice, *Mesa circular de agua móvil*, 1960, plexiglas
and water
Source: Squirru, *Kosice*, 67.

INVENTAR: Hallar o descubrir a fuerza de ingenio o meditación, o por mero acaso, una cosa nueva o no conocida. /Hallar, imaginar, crear su obra el poeta o el artista/

INVENCION: Acción y efecto de inventar. /Cosa inventada. /HALLAZGO/

I N V E N C I Ó N
contra
AUTOMATISMO

Fig. 27: Inside cover of *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944).

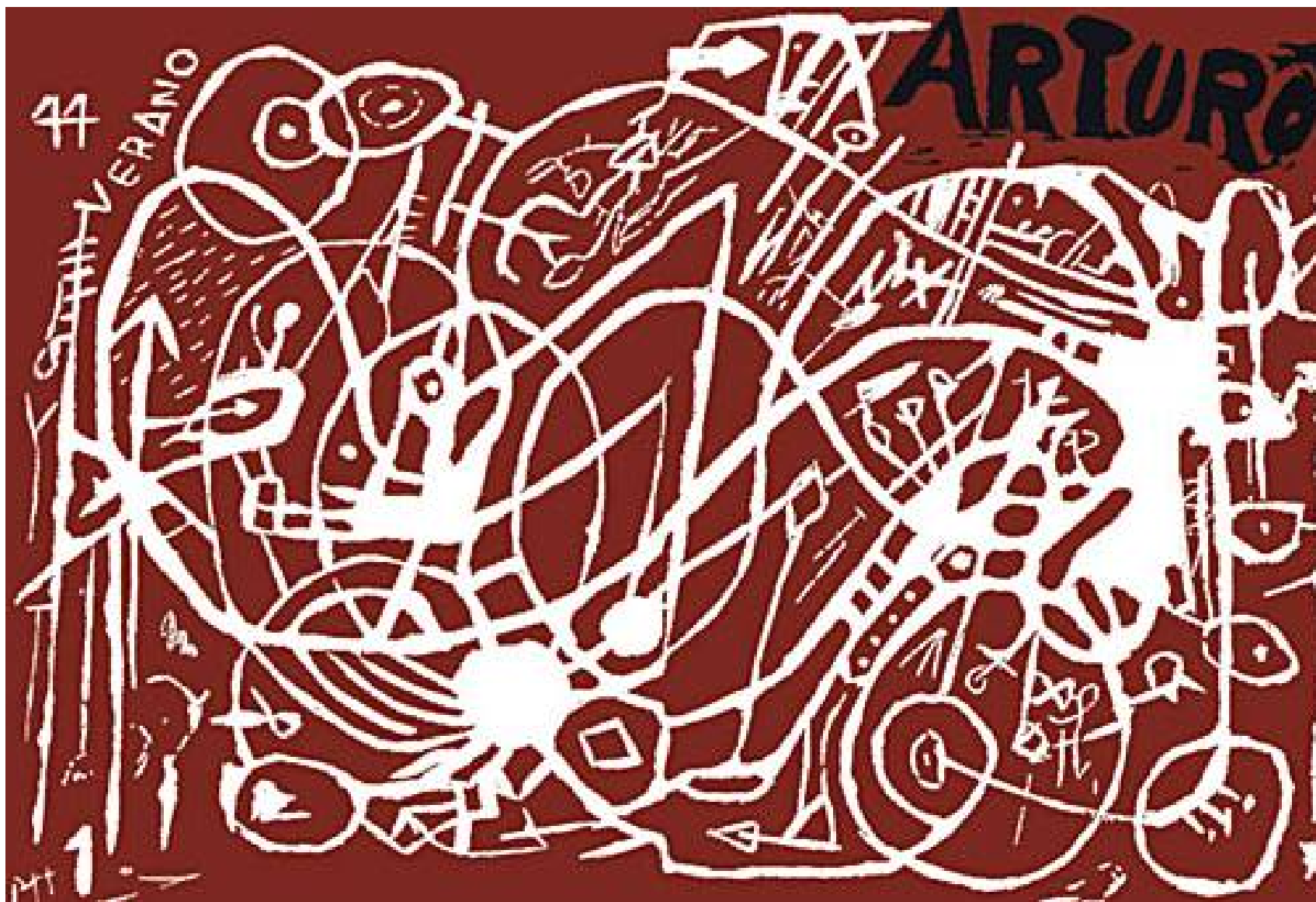


Fig. 28: Tomás Maldonado, [cover of *Arturo*], 1944, woodcut
 Source: WEBPAGE. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) (Summer 1944): cover.

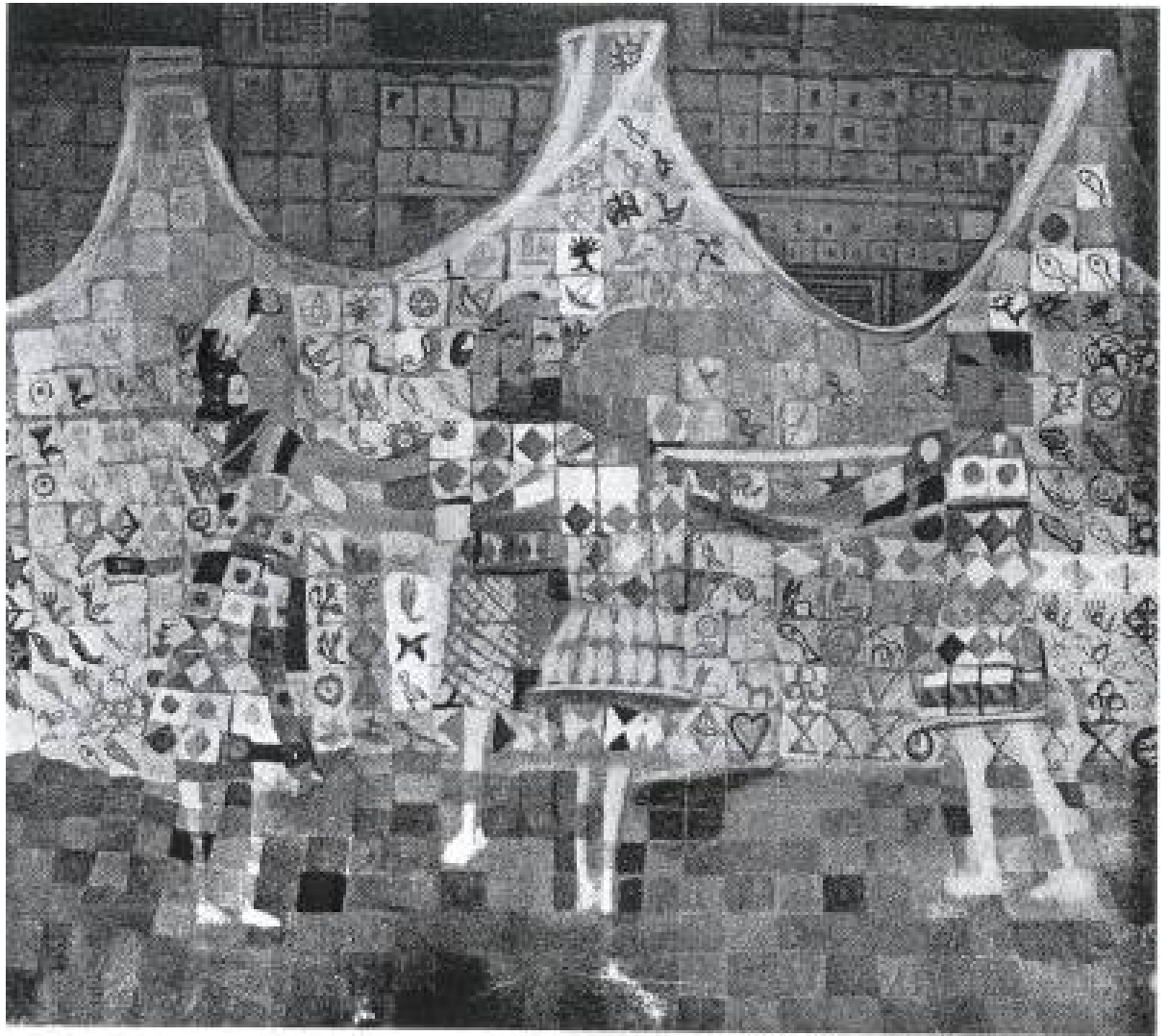


Fig. 29: María Helena Vieira da Silva, [untitled work], ca. 1944.
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Attributed
date follows date of reproduction in this publication.

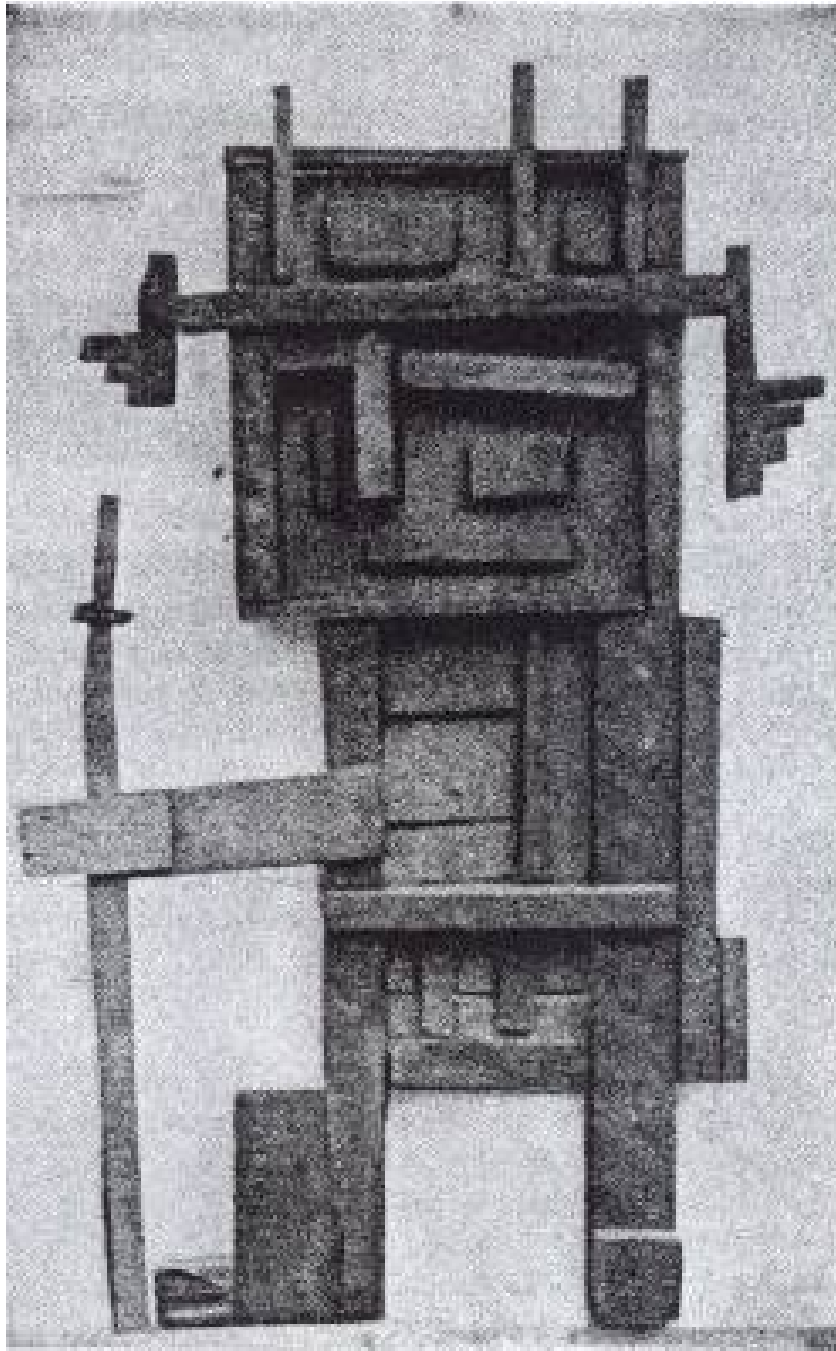


Fig. 30: Rhod Rothfuss, [untitled work], ca. 1944.
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Attributed
date follows date of reproduction in this publication.

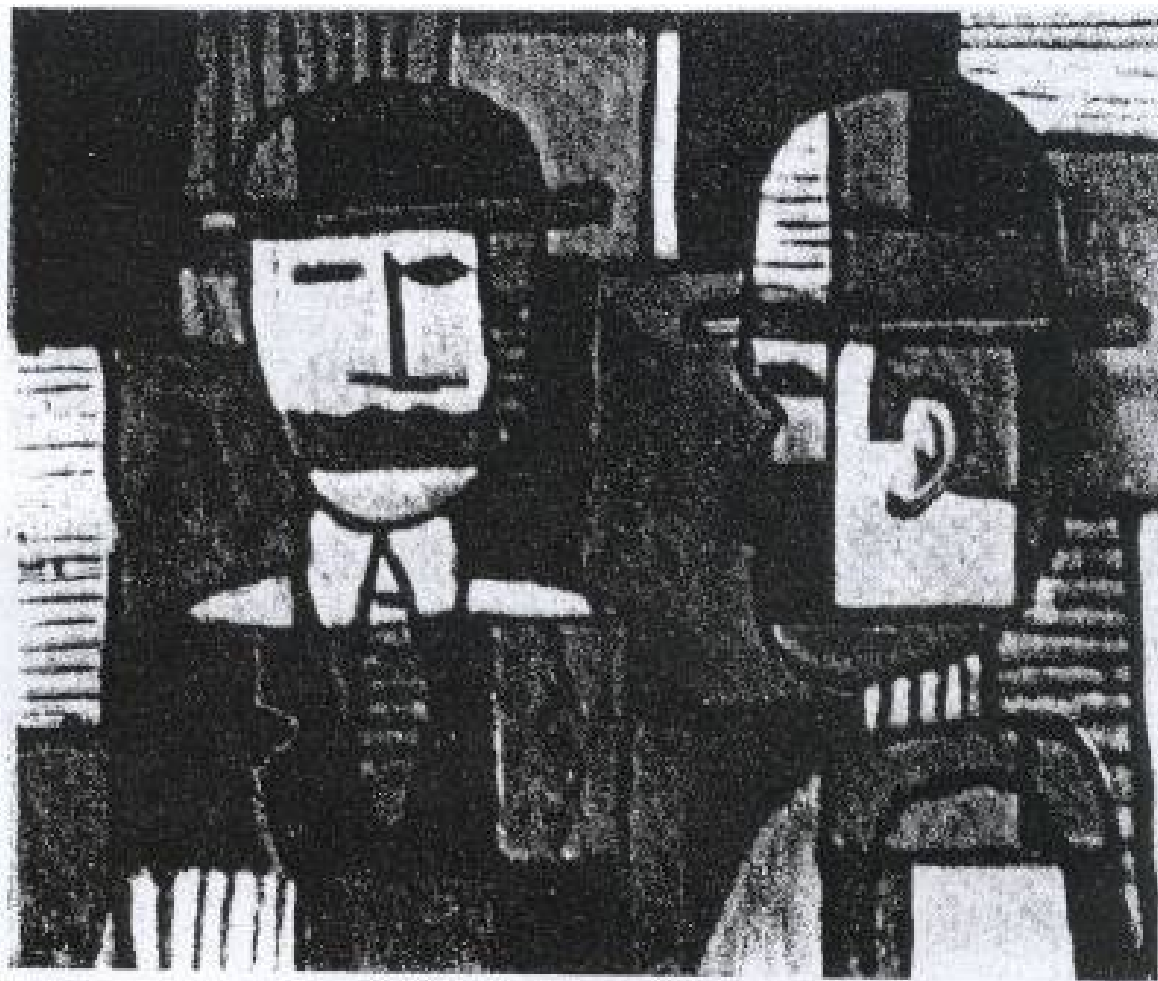


Fig. 31: Augusto Torres, [untitled work], ca. 1944
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this publication.

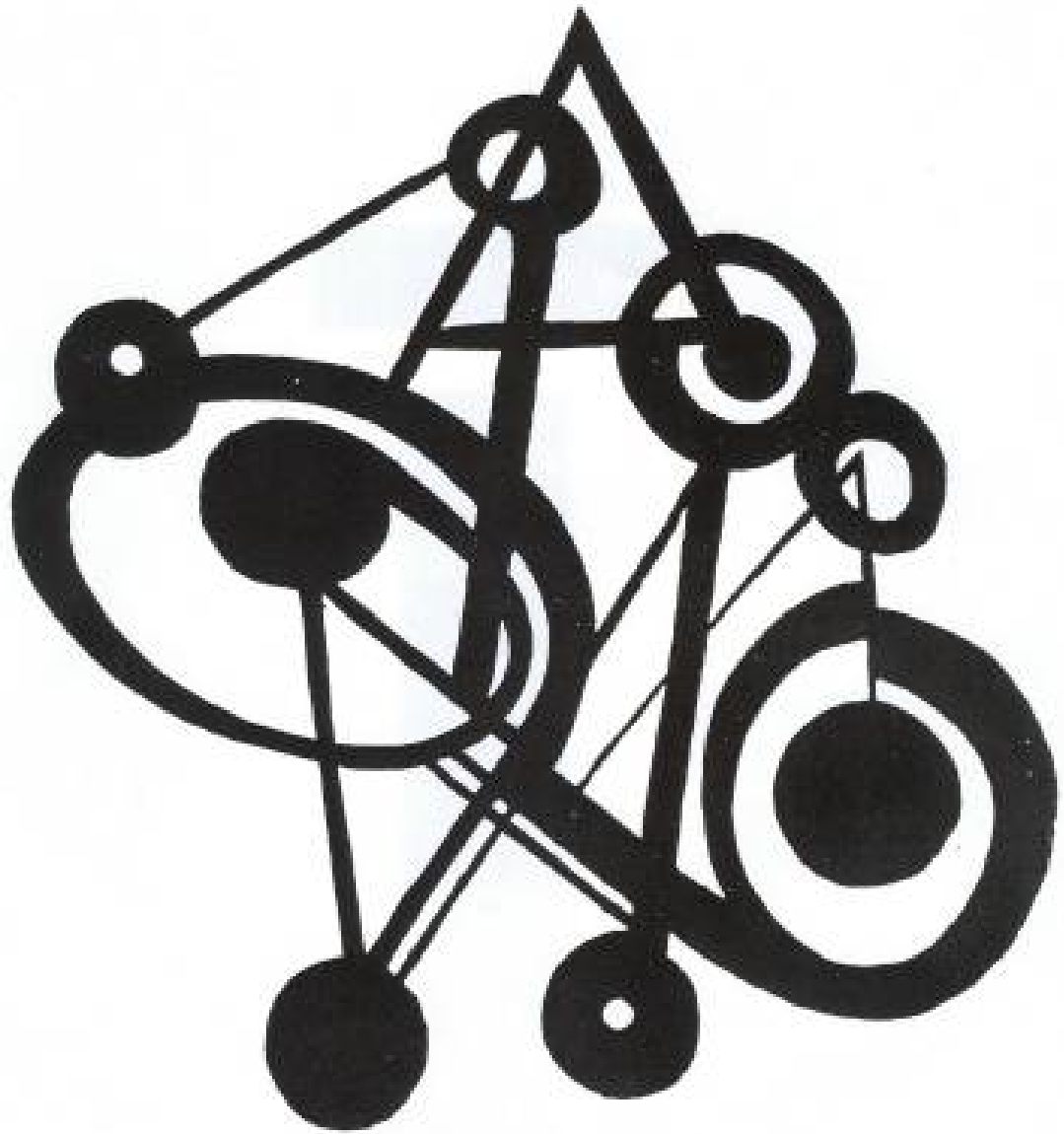


Fig. 32: Lidy Prati, [untitled work], ca. 1944.
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this publication.

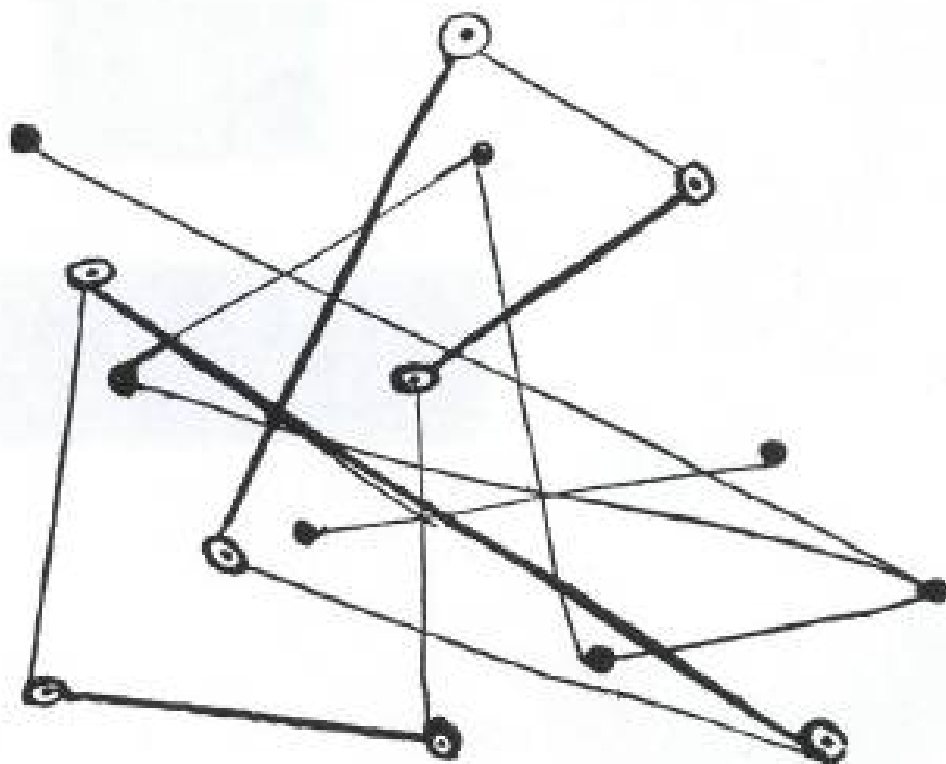


Fig. 33: Lidy Prati, [untitled work], ca. 1944.
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this publication.

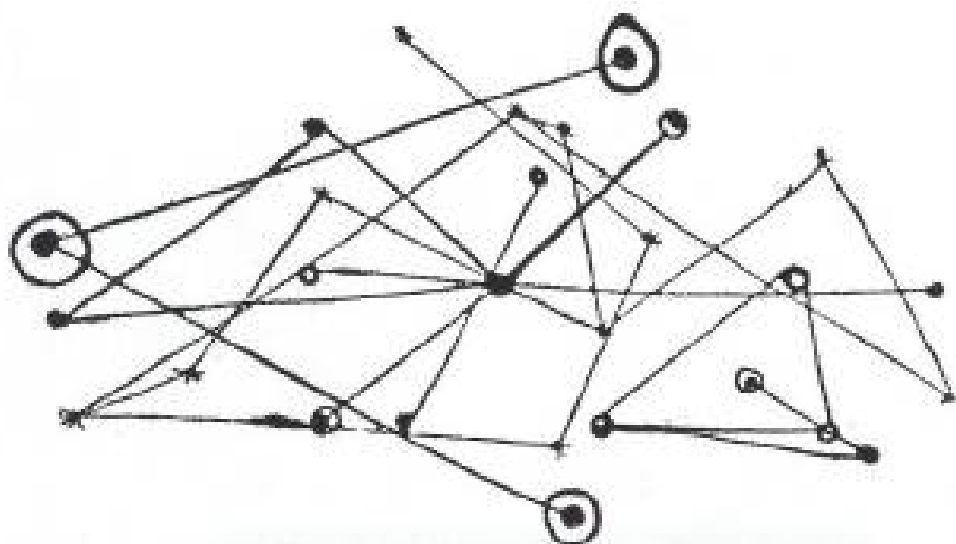


Fig. 34: Lidy Prati, [untitled work], ca. 1944.
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this publication.



Fig. 35: Tomás Maldonado, [untitled work], 1944.
Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

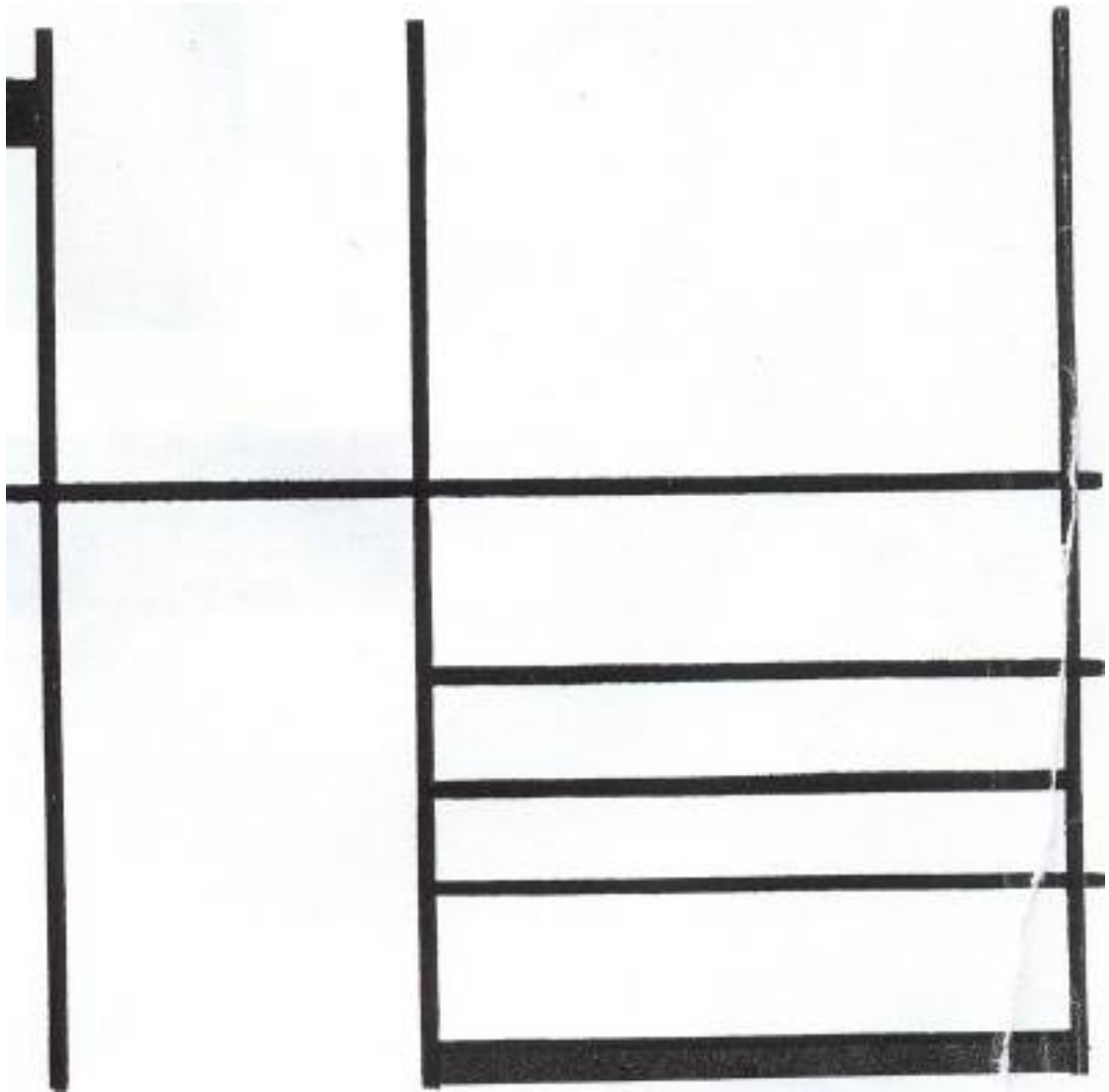
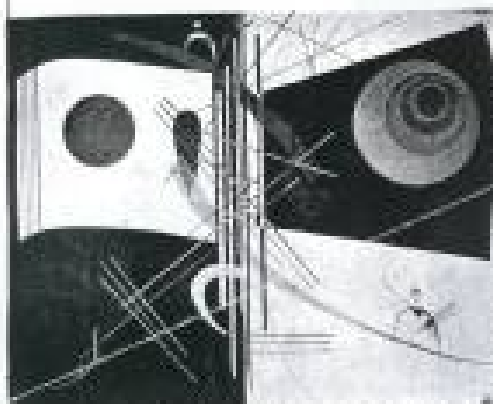


Fig. 36: Reproduction of a painting by Piet Mondrian, in *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

EL MARCO: UN PROBLEMA DE PLÁSTICA ACTUAL



Motivado por la revolución burguesa del 79 en Francia, una fuerte corriente naturalista invade las artes, especialmente la pintura, a la que por largos años relegará a una condición de mísera fotografía.

Será necesario que surja un Góngora, en el panorama plástico, con un concepto tan pictórico que le permita decir: "He descubierto que el sol es una cosa que no se puede reproducir, pero que se puede representar"; o un Góngora que escribiera: "El arte primitivo procede del espíritu y amplía la naturaleza. El arte que se hace llamar refinado, procede de la sensualidad y sirve a la naturaleza. La naturaleza es la servidora del primero y el amo del segundo. Convirtiéndolo en su servidor, haciéndose adorar por el artista, lo envilece. Así se como hemos caído en el abominable error del naturalismo que cometió con los griegos de Péricles..." (1), para que, lentamente, la pintura vuelva a sus viejas leyes, por tanto tiempo olvidadas.

Esto se concretará en 1907 (2), con la aparición del cubismo, con el cual volverán nuevamente todo su valor en la creación del cuadro, las leyes de proporción, de colorido, la composición, y todo lo relativo a técnica.

El cubismo será definido acertadamente por Guillermo Aguilera en "Le Temps" del 14 de octubre de 1914, refiriéndose al "Aspecto geométrico de una pintura, donde los artistas habían querido restituir, con una gran pureza, la realidad esencial". Y será este deseo de expresar la realidad de las cosas, lo que llevará la pintura a una plástica cada vez más abstracta, pasando por el futurismo, hasta culminar en las últimas épocas del cubismo, neo-dadaísmo, neo-plasticismo y también, en su rama abstracta, el constructivismo.

(1) Paul Góngora. — Notas Españolas.

(2) Dado por Guillermo Jovero en ART CUBISTE.

Fig. 37: Reproduction of a painting by Wassily Kandinsky, in *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

ARTURO

N. 1

VERANO 1944

Sumario

• *Artista Quiso* • *Edgar Bayley* • *Gyula Kádár*
 Con respecto a una futura Creación Literaria. J. Torres-García. El Marero
 un problema de plástica actual. Edoth Rodríguez

Poesías

Una Mala Noche con Sueños. *Wladimir Wladíslav*. Edoth Rodríguez. Dos Poemas
 en Casa. *Edgar Bayley*. Maximiliano Ochoa. Homage to Mozart. La Libertad.
 Momentos Puros. La Operación Plástica. La Vida Cotidiana. *Wladimir Wladíslav*
 Divertimento. Torres-García. Pegasus como héroe en el agua. *Artista Quiso*
 Transmisión de Tierra. Tormenta de un Eclíptico de Horizontes. Densidad del
 Pájaro Abandonado. *Wladimir Wladíslav*

Representaciones

Torres Maldonado. Edoth Rodríguez. Viento De Agua. Augusto Torres. Lily
 Maldonado. Torres-García. Kandinsky. Pao Maldonado.

ARTURO. Revista de Artes Abstractas. Aparece cuatro veces al año, al final
 de cada estación. Redacción: Artista Quiso, Edoth Rodríguez, Gyula Kádár,
 Edgar Bayley. La cubierta de este número fue impresa con los colores de
 Torres Maldonado. Vistas de Lily Maldonado. Textos originales. Impreso
 en los Talleres Gráficos Experimentales. Domingo F. Roa, Director 428

BUENOS AIRES



Fig. 38: *Arturo*'s table of contents.
 Source: *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

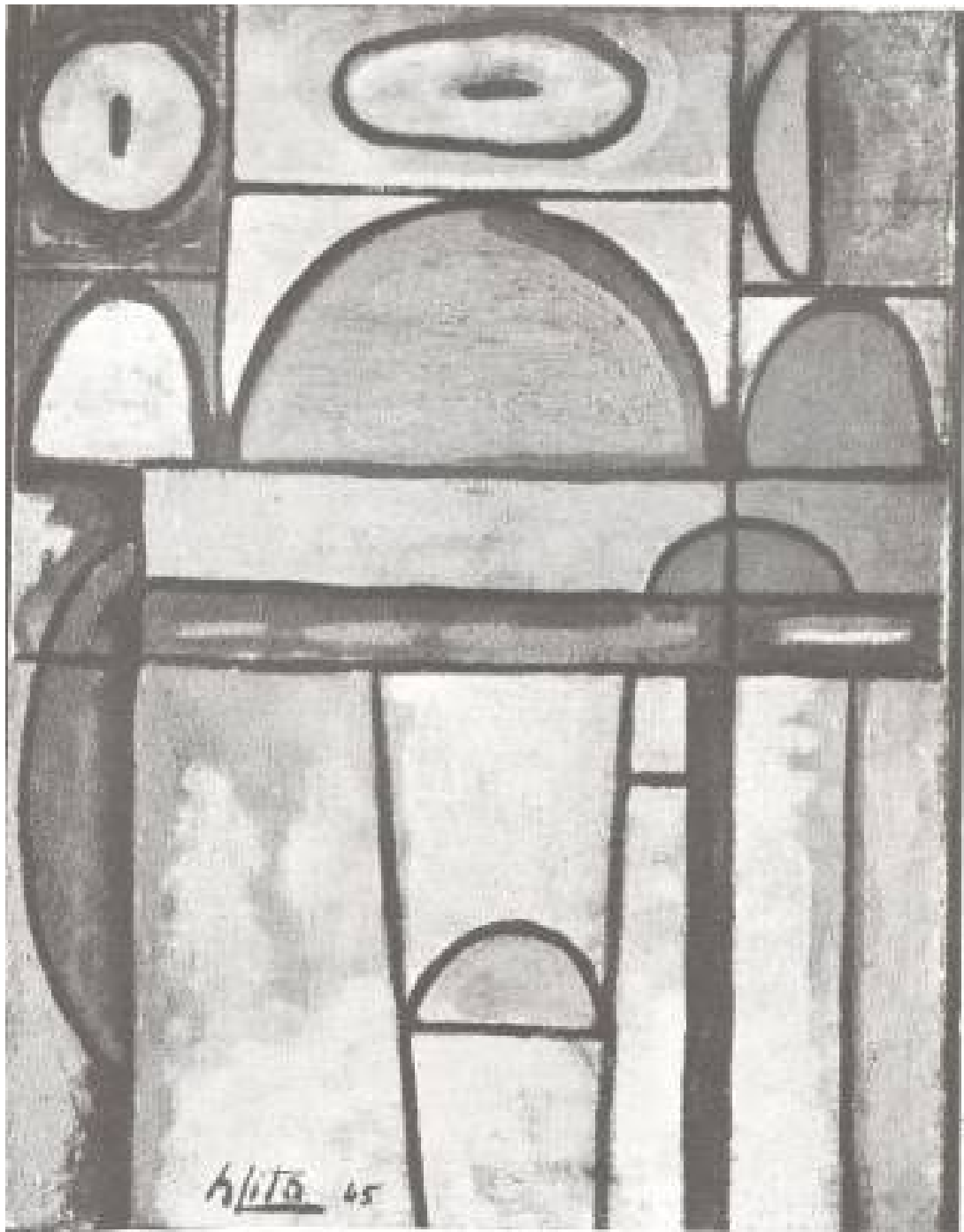


Fig. 39: Alfredo Hlito, *Construcción*, 1945, oil
Source: de Brill, "Hlito," *Pintores Argentinos del Siglo XX* no. 43, 3.



Fig. 40: Photo of Second Exhibition of the Movimiento de Arte Concreto Invención (prior to the formation of the Madí group) at the house of Grete Stern in Ramos Mejía.
Source: *Arte Madí*, 21.



Fig. 41: Grete Stern, *Clement Moreau*, 1943, photograph
Source: *Grete Stern: Obra Fotográfica en la Argentina*, 23



Fig. 42: Grete Stern, *Mary Stewart*, 1943, photograph
Source: Grete Stern: *Obra Fotográfica en la Argentina*, 62.

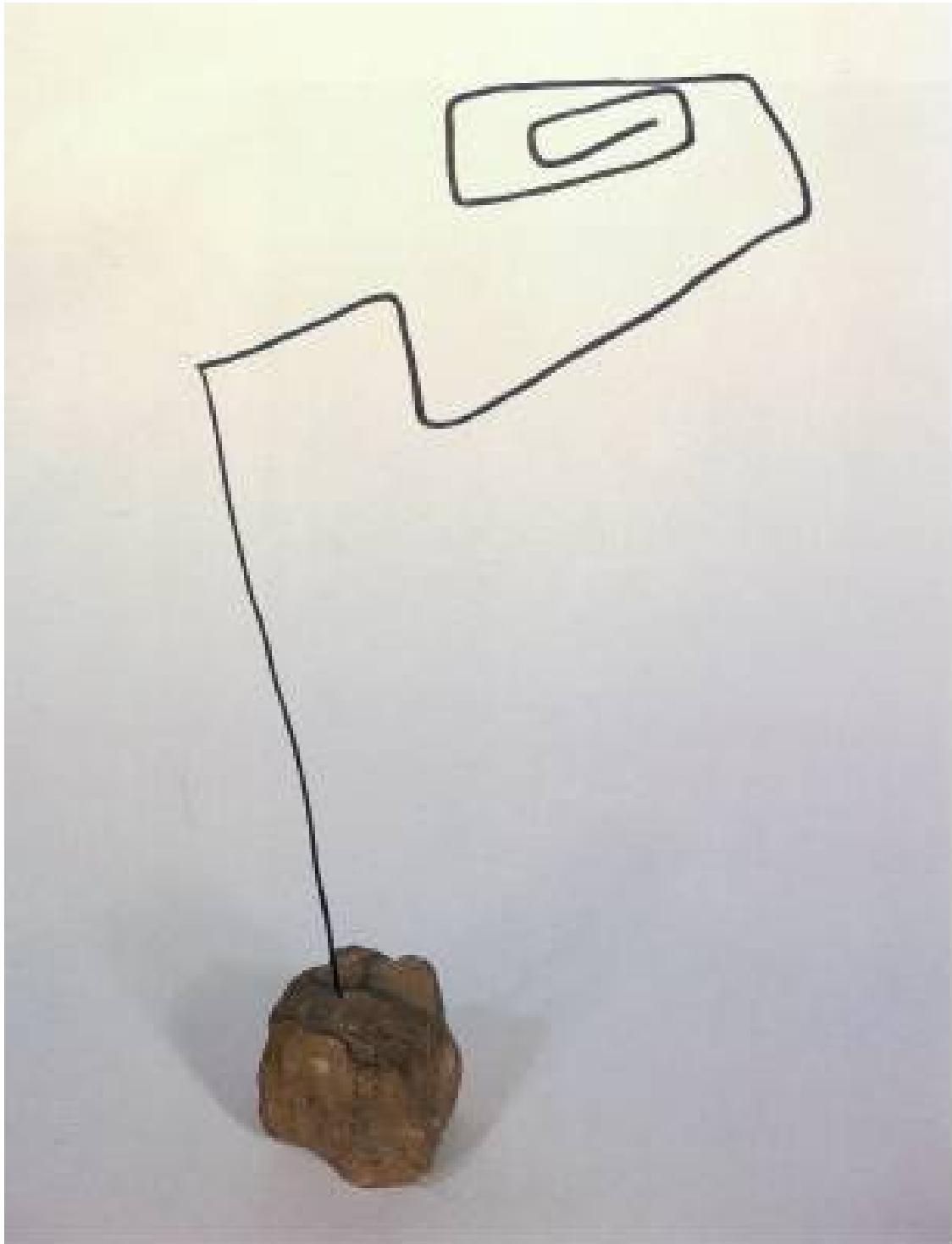


Fig. 43: Lucio Fontana, *Scultura Astratta*, 1934, iron and clay
Source: *Inverted Utopias*, 164.



Fig. 44: Lucio Fontana, *Muchacho del Paraná*, 1942, bronze
Source: *Anuario Plástica* (1942): 18.



Fig. 45: Photo of exhibition of Art Concret Invention at the house of Enrique Pichon-Rivière, Buenos Aires on October 8th, 1945.

Source: Kosice, *Arte Madí*, 20.



Fig. 47: Maruja Mallo, *Cabeza de Mujer*, 1941, oil
Source: <http://www.slideshare.net/pspain/8-de-marzo/>



Fig. 48: Photo showing demonstration that took place in Plaza Francia, Buenos Aires, on August 24th, 1944, to celebrate the liberation of Paris.

Source: *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 25th, 1944): 1.

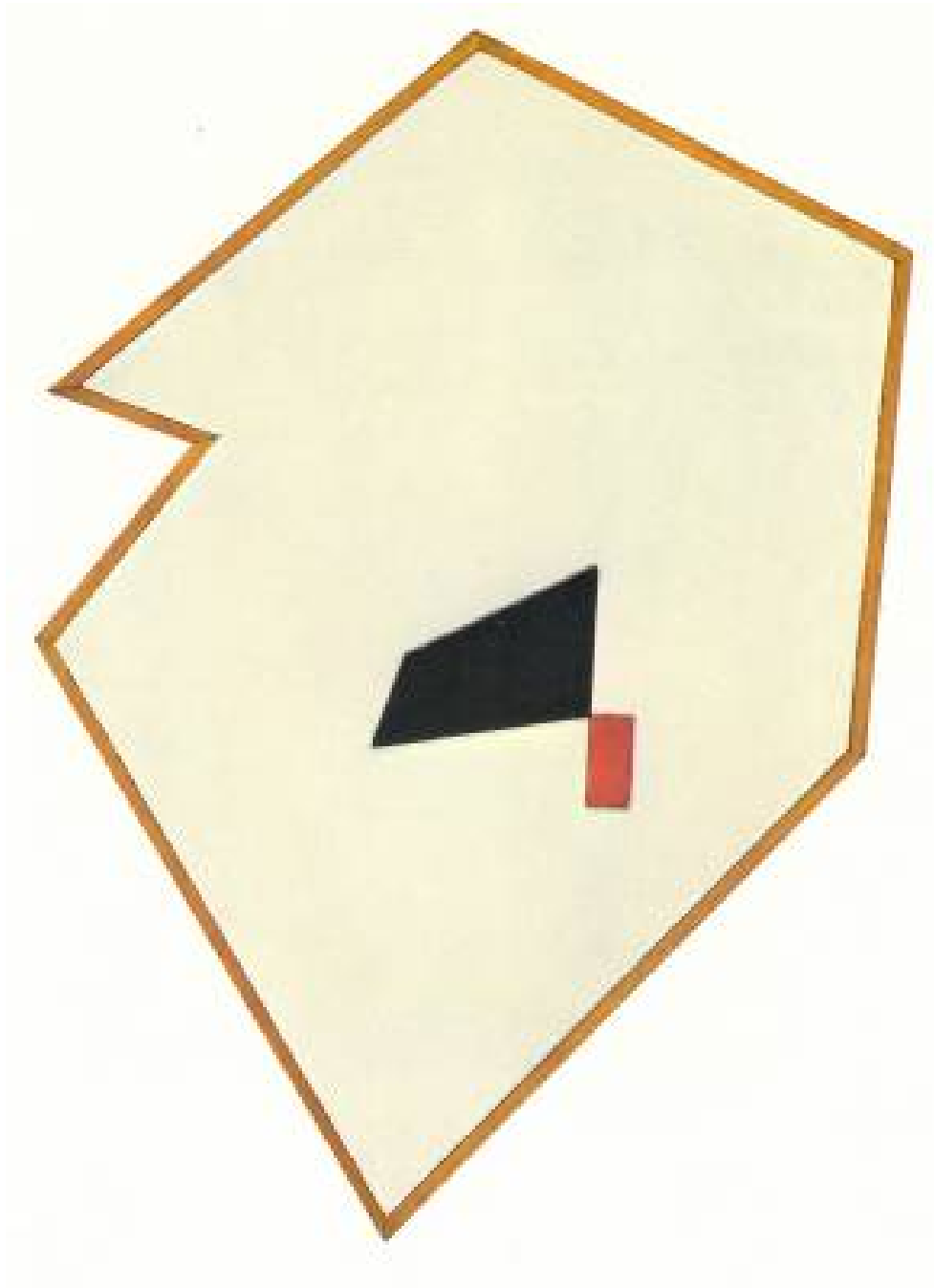


Fig. 49: Tomás Maldonado, [untitled work], ca. 1946, tempera on board attached to enamel on cardboard

Source: Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmnianos*, plate IX. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 5.

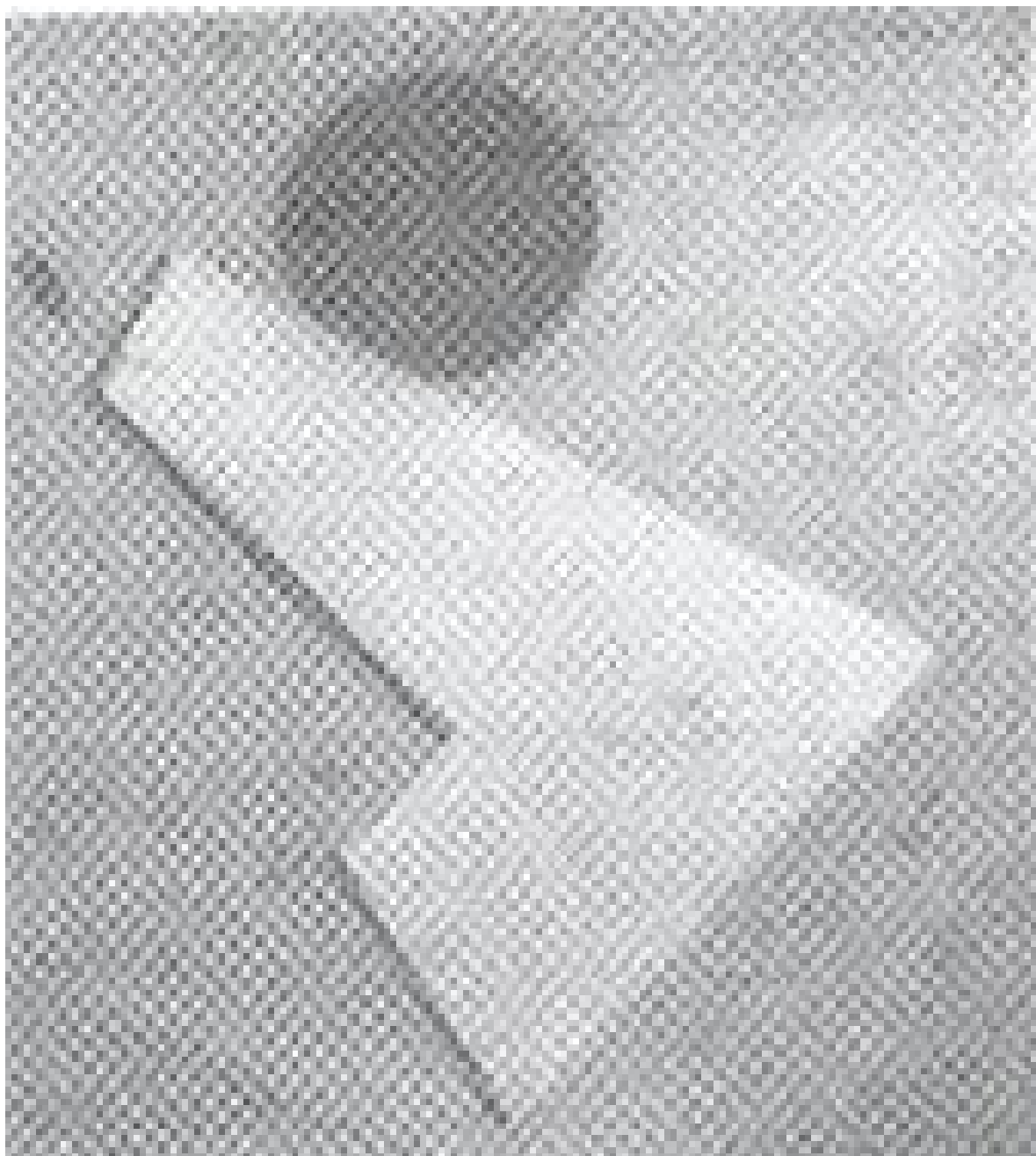


Fig. 50: Alfredo Hlito, [untitled work], ca. 1946
Source: *Revista Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Aug. 1946):
back cover. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this publication.

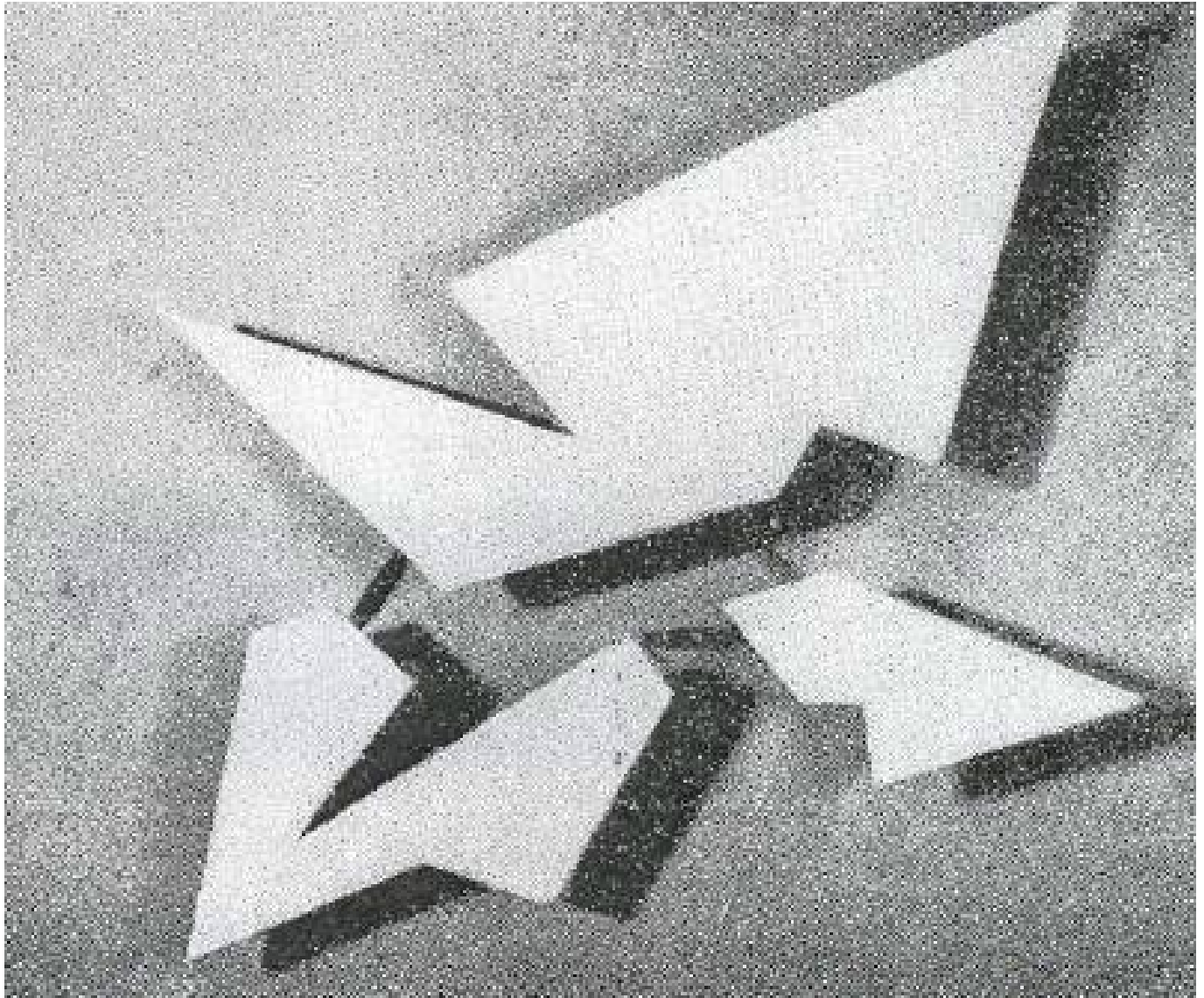


Fig. 51: Alberto Molenberg, [untitled work], ca. 1946, wood
Source: *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 5.



Fig. 52: Manuel Espinosa, [untitled work], ca. 1946, oil on wood
Source: *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata*, 107. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Aug. 1946): back cover.

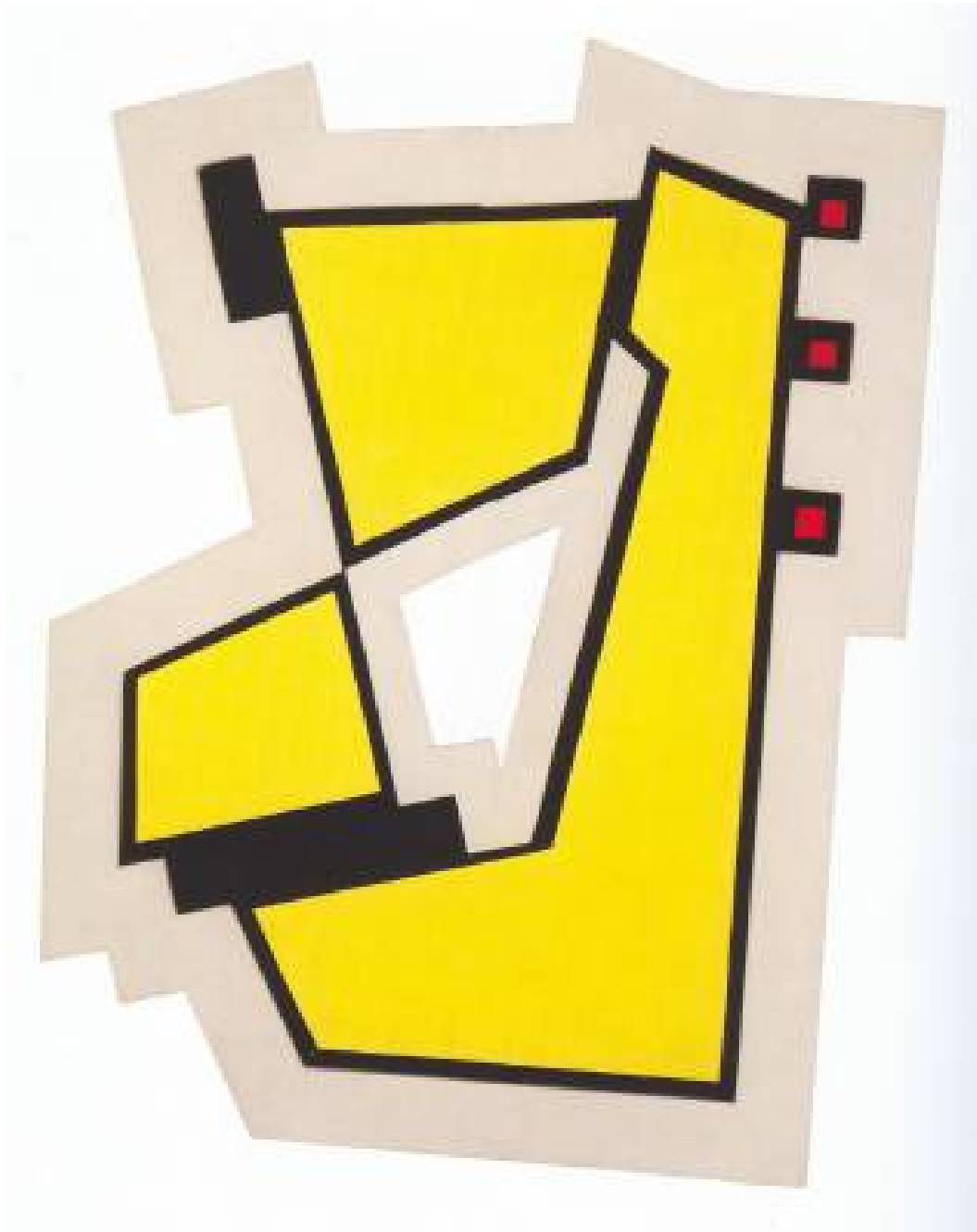


Fig. 53: Rhod Rothfuss, [untitled work], ca. 1948, enamel on cardboard and wood

Source: *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, cat. 78. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

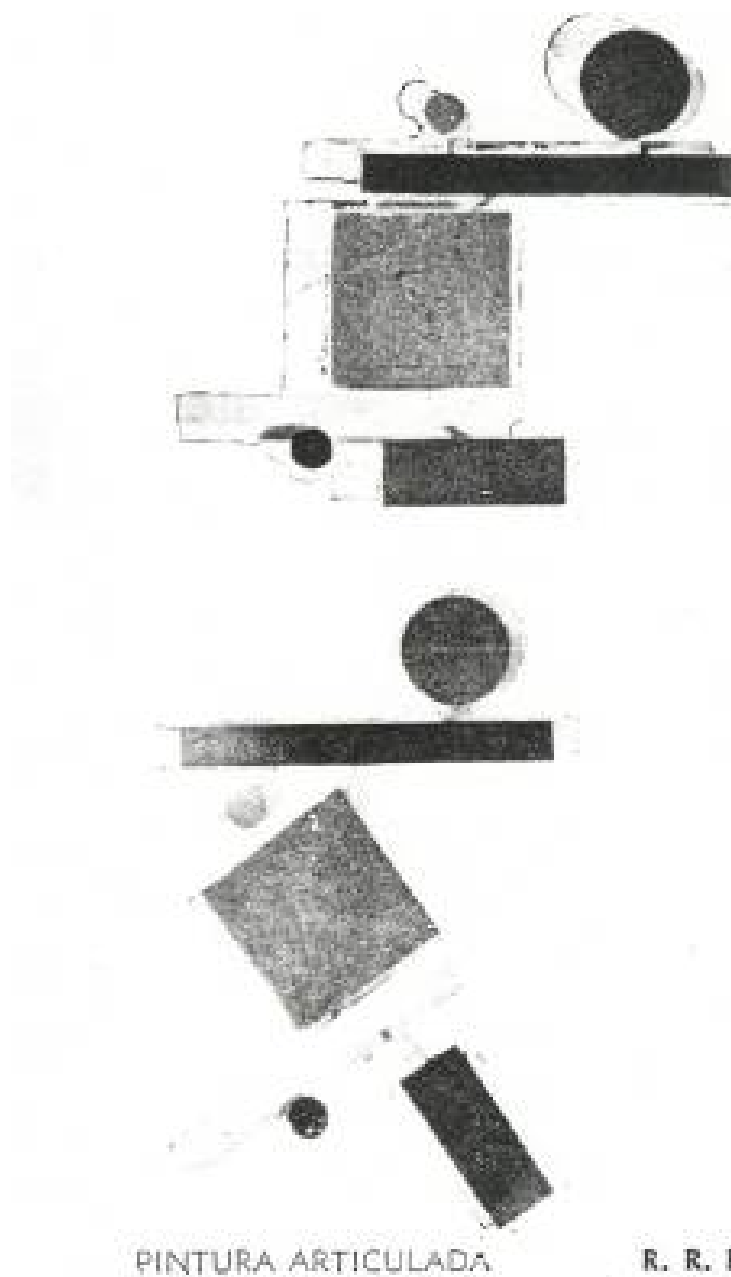


Fig. 54: Raimundo Rasas Pet, "Pintura Articulada," ca. 1948,
whereabouts unknown
Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p. Attributed date
follows date of reproduction in this source.

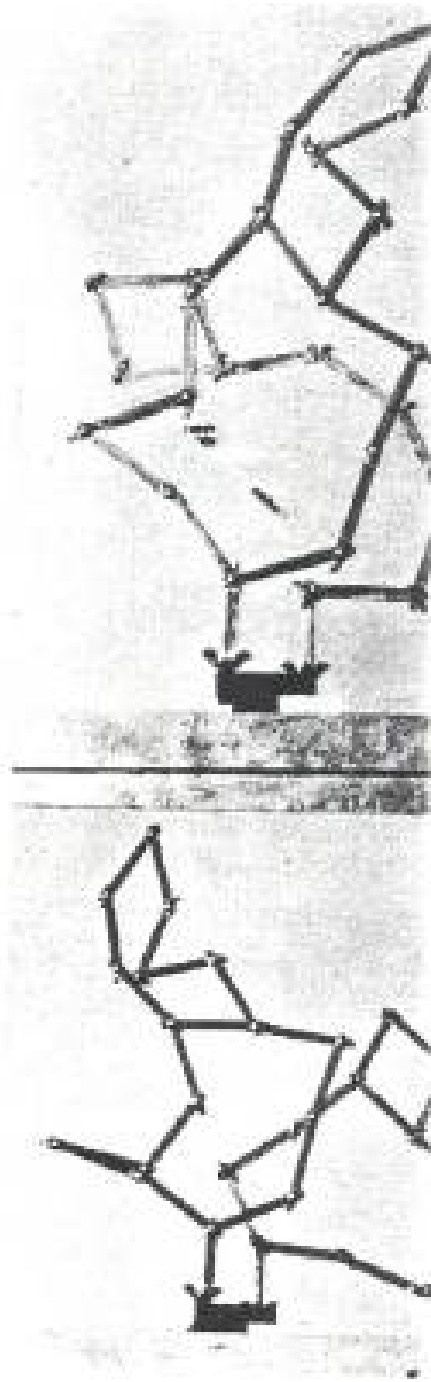


Fig. 55: Gyula Kosice, “Escultura Articulada Lúdica,” ca. 1948,
whereabouts unknown

Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p. Attributed date follows
date of reproduction in this publication.

[illegible]

328



Fig. 57: "Universidad Obrera," 1948, poster.
Source: Gené, *Un Mundo Feliz*, 89.



Fig. 58: "Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión: 5to aniversario de su creación,"
1948, poster
Source: Gené, *Un Mundo Feliz*, 99.



Fig. 59: "Día de la Raza," 1948, poster
Source: Gené, *Un Mundo Feliz*, Lamina XVI



Fig. 60: Barrio Saavedra, 1948, poster.

Source: Gutierrez and Gutman, eds., *Viviendas: Ideas y Contradicciones*, 117.



Fig. 61: Photo of demonstration that took place on October 17th, 1945, in Buenos Aires.
Source: *17 de Octubre*. Secretaría de Prensa y Difusión, n.d., n.p. Courtesy Instituto Nacional Juan Domingo Perón, Buenos Aires.



Fig. 62: Electoral Campaign, 1946, photograph
Source: Courtesy Instituto Nacional Juan Domingo Perón, Buenos Aires.

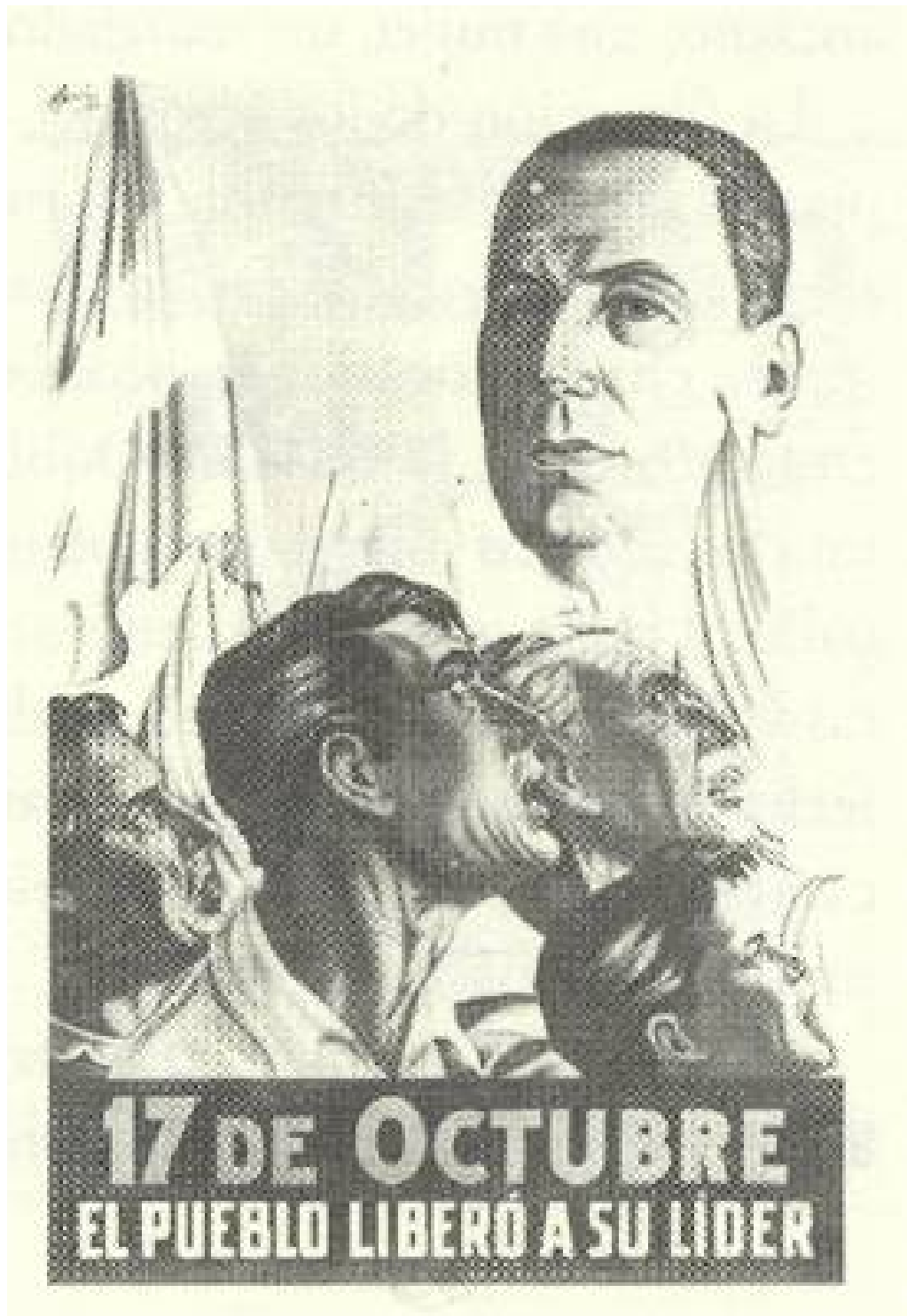


Fig. 63: “17 de octubre: el pueblo liberó a su líder,” 1948, poster
Source: Gené, *Un Mundo Feliz*, 69.

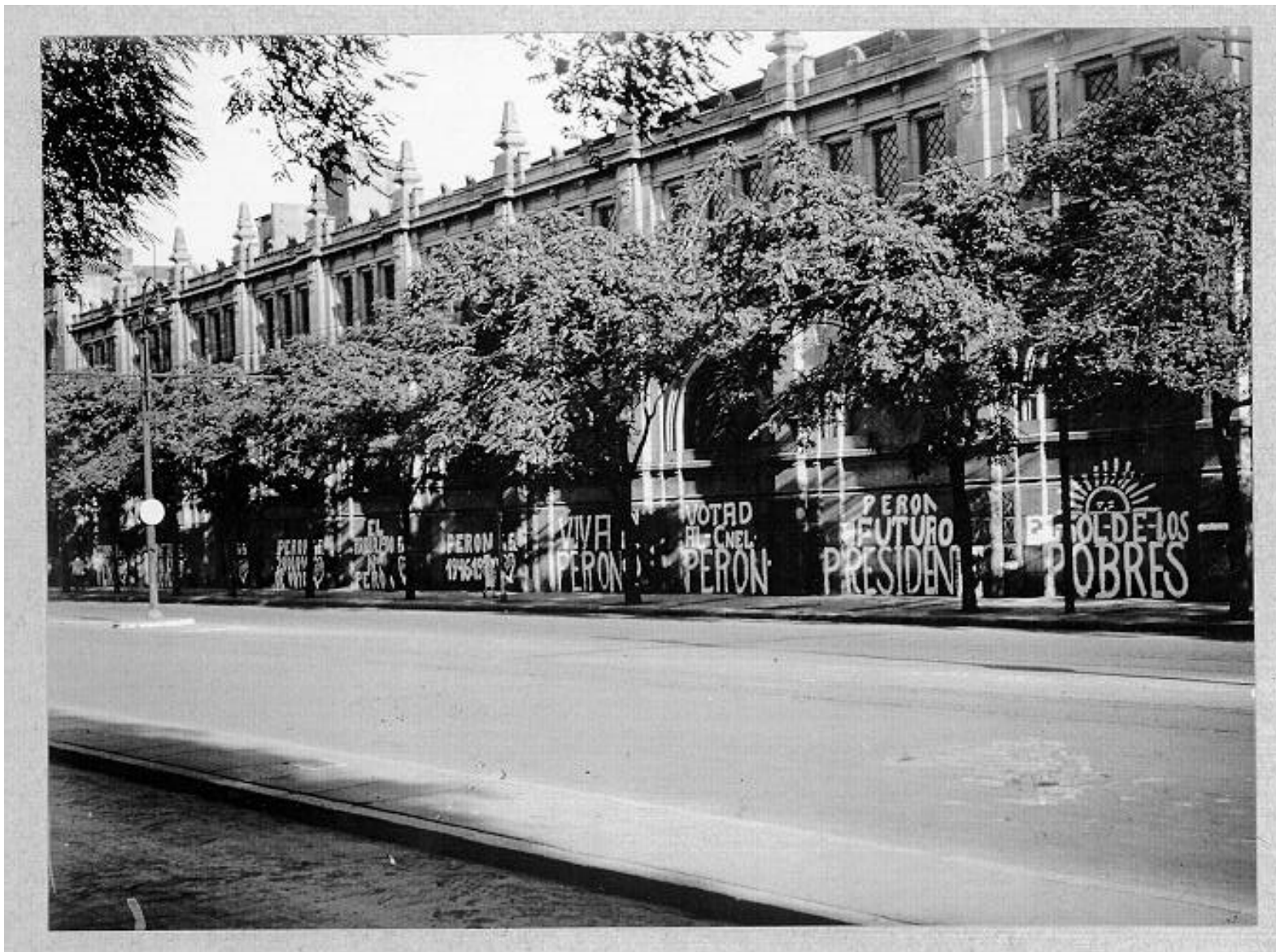


Fig. 64: Electoral Campaign, 1946, photograph
Source: Courtesy Instituto Nacional Juan Domingo Perón, Buenos Aires.



Fig. 65: Grete Stern, *Madí*, ca. 1948, photomontage
Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this source.

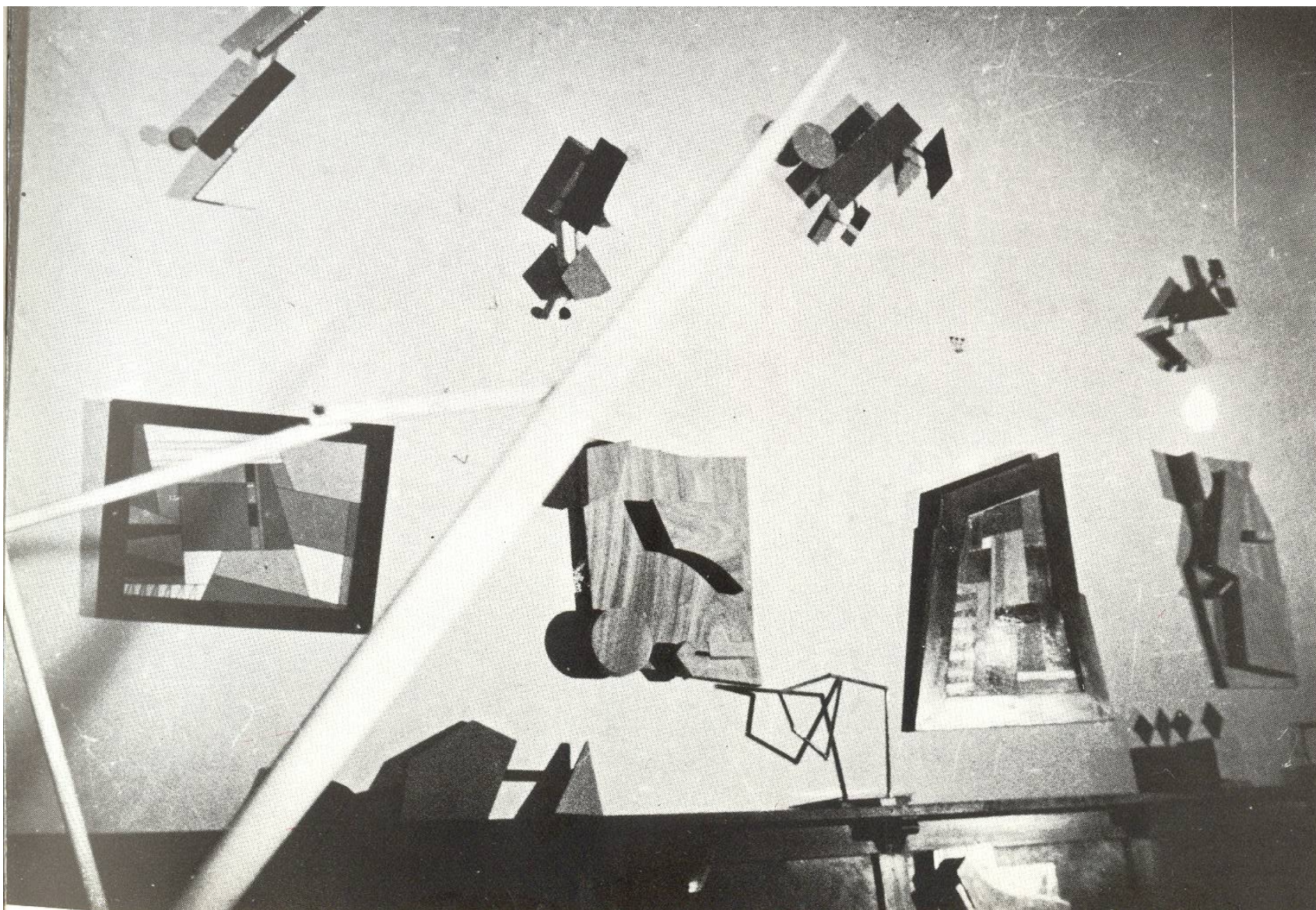


Fig. 66: View of Madí works at Altamira: Escuela Libre de Artes Plásticas, Buenos Aires, October 14th to 31st, 1946

Source: Kosice, *Arte Madí*, 49. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947), cover.



Tres aspectos de la muestra y proyección que el movimiento Madí realizó el 2 de agosto de 1948 en el Teatro del Pueblo. En dicho acto se ofreció una audición de música contemporánea organizada por E. Eitler. Se ejecutaron obras de: Bartók, Lapatinicoff, Schüller, Eitler, Maturana, Santoro y Haba.

Solamente una interpretación dialéctica de la historia del arte, suministra los prolegómenos indispensables para situar y comprender las diversas manifestaciones artísticas. Pasados los primeros estadios del desarrollo cultural de nuestros días, la **manufactura estética** pendida de condiciones dadas por cada época.

Al franquear ya, todo un ciclo con la aparición del impresionismo, aparece simultáneamente con los "fauves" el fenómeno del **expresionismo** fuente del arte moderno.

El expresionismo igual que el **cubismo** deformación de la realidad; pero el cubismo geometriza la realidad; ley de frontalidad— y trece de elementos aportados por la civilización industrial.

El **dadaísmo** es la puerta de escape de las meras experiencias. Tergiversa y confunde las posiciones estéticas que el cubismo y el expresionismo, agregado a la conmoción espiritual del momento, favorecen.

El **surrealismo** con su basamento híbrido entre lo físico e idealista, acude al subconsciente para la catáxis literaria y de asombro para una estética que intentó oscurecer la conciencia del hombre.

Con el **arte concreto** y por extensión con la forma de abstraccionismo, constructivismo, prematismo, neoplasticismo— se inicia el período de la no-figuración.

Pero el arte concreto permanece aún limitado por la constante estratificación que viene de cláusulas y normas del arte anterior.

Junto con la insurgencia de las fuentes, desencadena la no-figuración ante las expresiones de belleza, se alían elementos puros. Así, englobado en la no-figuración observa la acción intermediaria de autorintuicionismo, no-figuración ingenua, etc.

Delinear pues, al artista en la simpleza de arte no-figurativo no presupone su independencia ulterior, aunque comporte aislamiento de valores de referencia (Mondrian, Klee, Gropius, Pevsner, etc.).

Hasta aquí sintéticamente las etapas del arte, en adelante **Madí**.

Nosotros madistas, no buscamos la seguridad con nada. Auguramos la invención de una geometría cinética. La arquitectura, escultura, pintura cinéticas. Una composición sagrada estructura sin enlace que prevalezca con la economía total. Un poema no es una sucesión de imágenes transformables en noticia.

Polivalencia de la proposición inventiva: imagen pura en el poema, articulación, desplazamiento dirigido de la vida en el objeto, planos irregulares y planos en pintura.

Un proceso imaginativo, cerebral, un ordenamiento científico, realista, una presencia estética sin demostración.

Madí constata la prolongación de su trayectoria a otros continuos de embalse geométrico, lentes eficaces que apuntan al mundo sensible.

Madí proclama su estilo de recomienzo: concepto de invención y creación de objetos **esenciales**.

Madí es el arte de nuestro tiempo.

Fig. 67: Photos of music show and Madí exhibition at Teatro del Pueblo, Buenos Aires, August 2nd, 1948.

Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

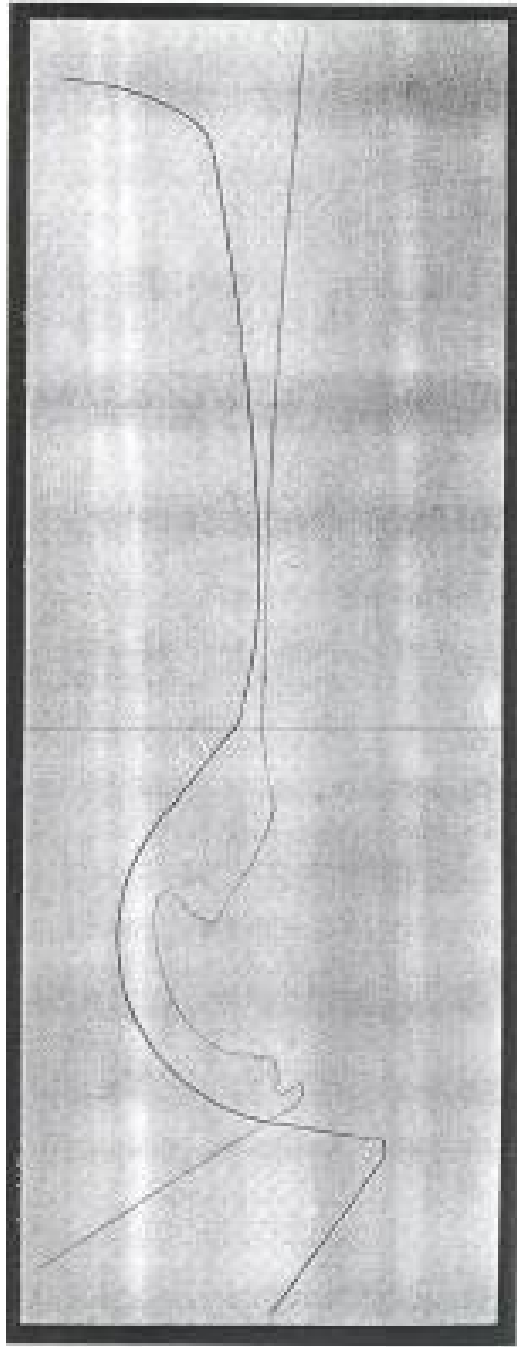


Fig. 68: Lidy Prati, *Estructura vibracional desde un círculo*, ca. 1951.

Whereabouts unknown.

Source: *Nueva Visión* no. 1 (Dec. 1951): 6. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this source.



Fig. 69: Tomás Maldonado, *Tema sobre rojo*, ca. 1953, oil on canvas.
Source: *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, cat. 55. Attributed date follows date
of reproduction in *Nueva Visión* no. 4 (1953): 32.

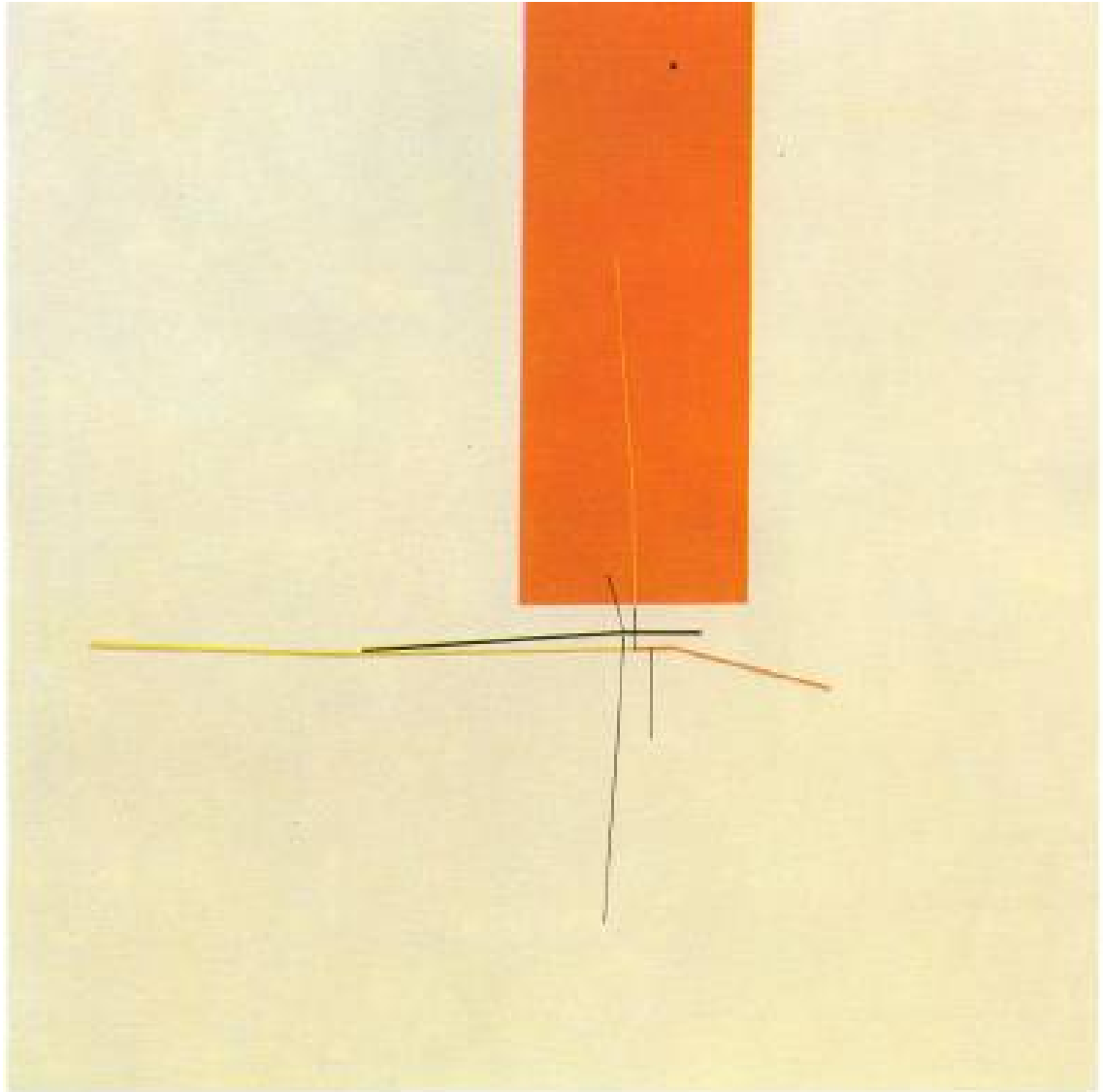


Fig. 70: Alfredo Hlito, *Sin Título*, ca. 1952, oil on canvas.

Source: Alfredo Hlito, *Obra Pictórica*, 1945-1985, 19. Attributed date follows information about this work in *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (Jan. 1953): 26.



Fig. 71: Photo showing Juan Domingo Perón's entrance into Parque Eva Perón in Villa Argentina, Quilmes, on his visit to sanction the expropriation of the Bemberg beer factory.
Source: *Mundo Peronista* no. 81 (Feb. 1955): 24.



Fig. 72: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 1 no. 23 (Jun. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 73: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 1 no. 24 (Jul. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 74: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 26 (Aug. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 75: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 25 (Jul. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 76: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 27 (Aug. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires

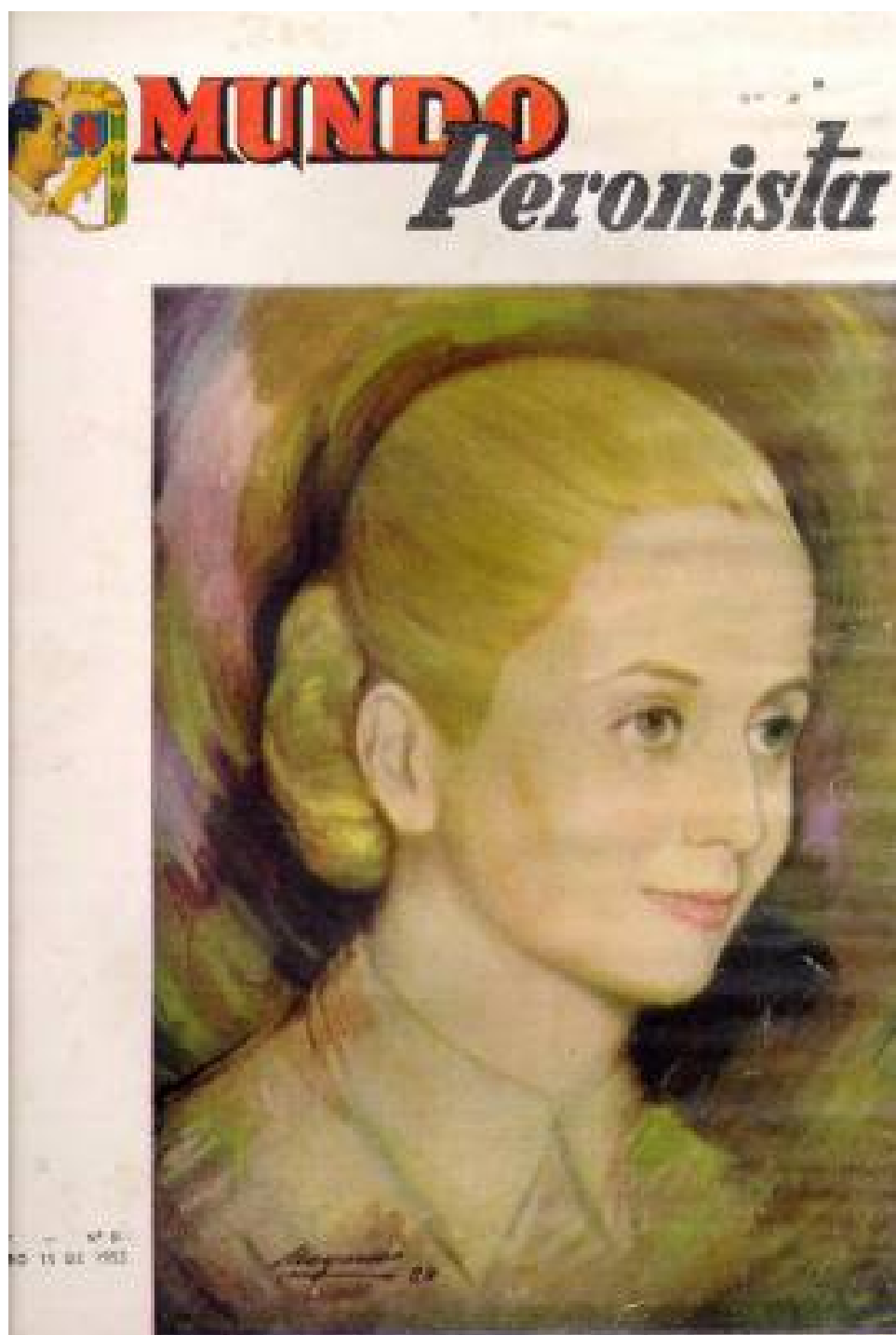


Fig. 77: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 4 no. 81 (Feb. 1955)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 78: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 32 (Dec. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 79: Cover of *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 33 (Nov. 1952)
Courtesy of Instituto Nacional Juan D. Perón, Buenos Aires



Fig. 80: Stamps of Eva Perón printed in the early 1950s.

Source: Casa de la Moneda, República Argentina.
www.camoar.org.ar



Fig. 81: Eva Perón, *La Razón de mi Vida*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Peuser, 1951.
Source: <http://www.eneldesvan.com/images/productos/2137/01/c-2137.jpg?PHPSESSID=954dd993a54c28fdc976370958dcc92f>

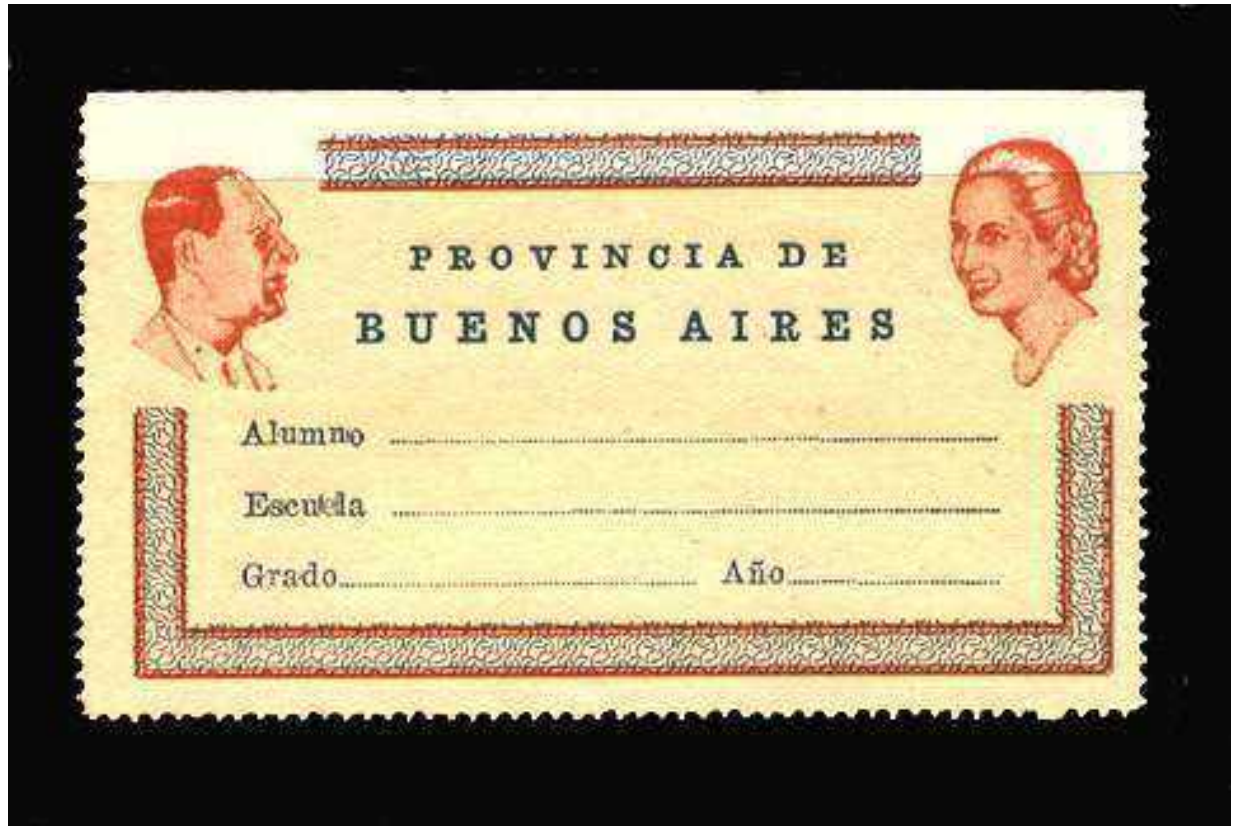


Fig. 82: Label for school materials bearing bust portraits of Juan Domingo Perón and Eva Perón.

Source: <http://members.fortunecity.com/evita2/colegio.html>



Fig. 83: Eva Perón in cover of magazine *Mundo Deportivo* no. 172 (Jul. 31, 1952).

Source: <http://members.fortunecity.com/evita2/5revistas.html>



Fig. 84: Eva Perón in cover of magazine *El Hogar* no. 2229 (Aug. 1, 1952)

Source: <http://members.fortunecity/evita2/5revistas.html>

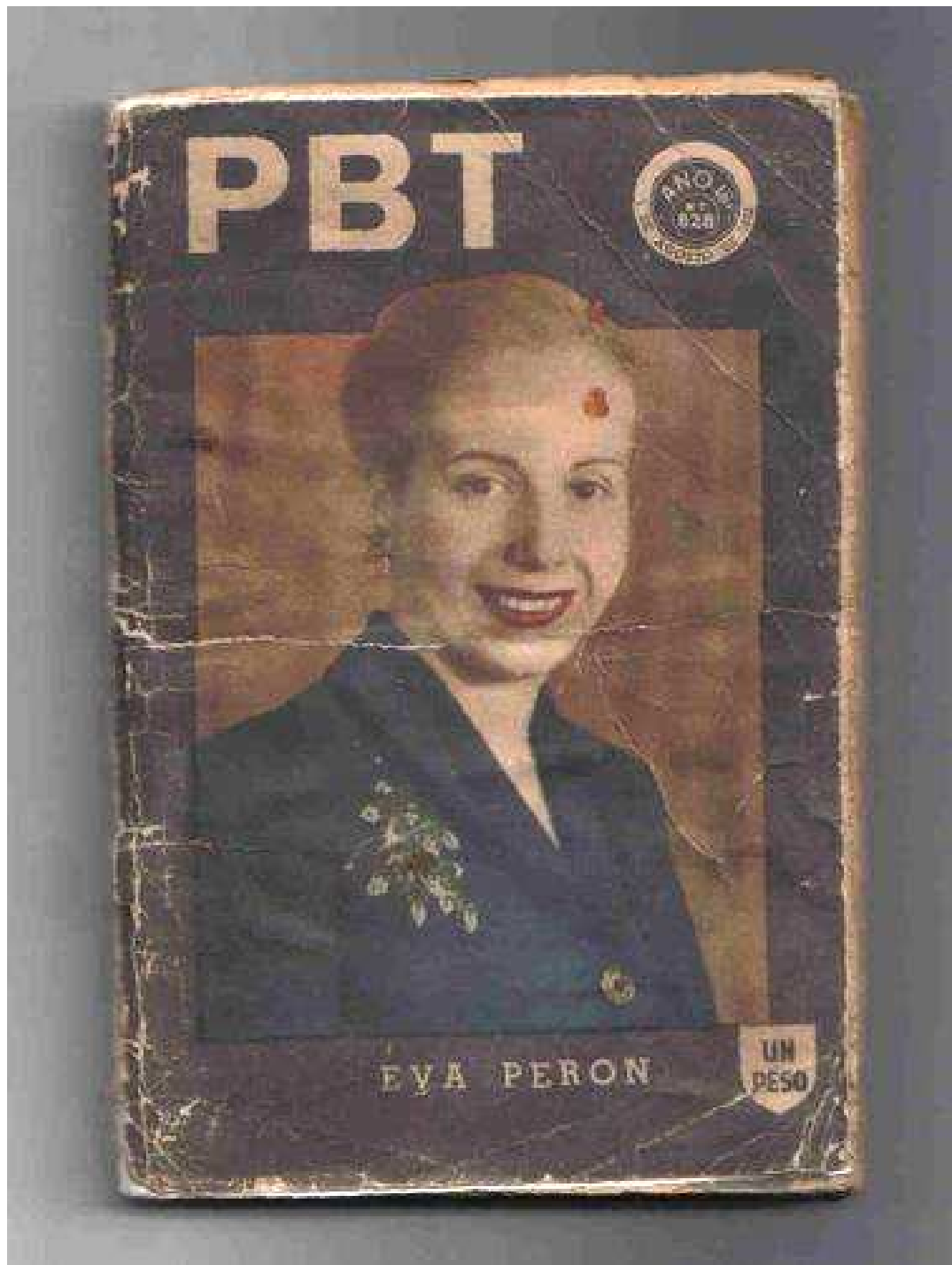


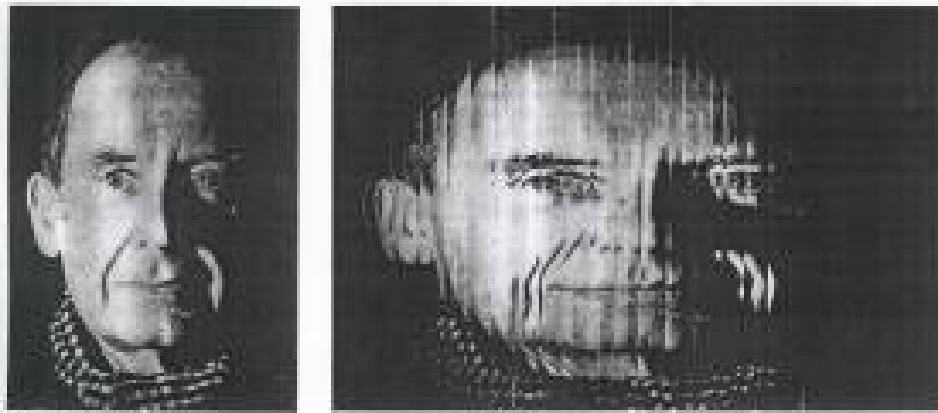
Fig. 85: Eva Perón in cover of magazine *PBT* (Jul. 1952)
Source: <http://members.fortunecity.com/evita2/pbt.html>



Fig. 86: Left: Plaque awarded in competitive events sponsored by the Peronist government. Source: “Nuestro departamento de difusión,” *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 34 (Dec. 1, 1952): 30.

Center: Championship cup awarded in events sponsored by the Peronist government. Source: “Nuestro Departamento de Difusión,” *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 34 (Dec. 1, 1952): 30.

Right: Championship cup awarded in events sponsored by the Peronist government. Source: “Nuestro Departamento de Difusión,” *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 33 (Nov. 15, 1952): 19.



Las "Variaciones sobre un tema", desmontadas originalmente a un ritmo en homenaje a Walter Gropius, constituyen una experiencia visual de indudable interés. El propósito, una vez más en el arte contemporáneo, es descomponer una imagen de sus significados habituales. En este sentido, la imagen original es una cara, la cara de Walter Gropius. Variaciones del fotomontaje sobre procedimientos, Schawinsky desvirtúa, descompone, distorsiona, la imagen-obra. Si la caricatura y los dibujos se venidos apremian y afirman el referente, finalmente convierten en soporte cultural, las "variaciones" de Schawinsky tratan de desvirtuar su referencia. Las motivaciones de "Alcorcón, río mirando", desde Septimo Pardo hasta Pío Pardo, han trascendido tanto ahora. Es que se puede hacer una caricatura de la expresión que postula tener un valor absoluto. Toda cultura tiene su cara, un fin, sus lugares comunes, sus mitos, sus palabras, su música, pero a toda cultura también, irreflexivamente, le llega el momento de su desmoronamiento. Estos rostros caricaturales ocurren, que en los rostros más serenos de él mismo y en las situaciones mismas previas, los significados se desmoronan. Algunos rostros, otros se desmoronan totalmente y, más tarde, nuevos rostros. Schawinsky sabe todo esto. Es más, porque el espacio libre que queda entre la cara y la máscara e incluye una forma y desmoronamiento. En este sentido.

T. M.

Fig. 87: Photomontage by Xanti Schawinsky
Source: T.M., "Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara," *Nueva Visión*
no. 5 (1954): 20.



Fig. 88: Photomontage by Xanti Schawinsky
Source: T.M., "Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara," *Nueva Visión*
no. 5 (1954): 21.

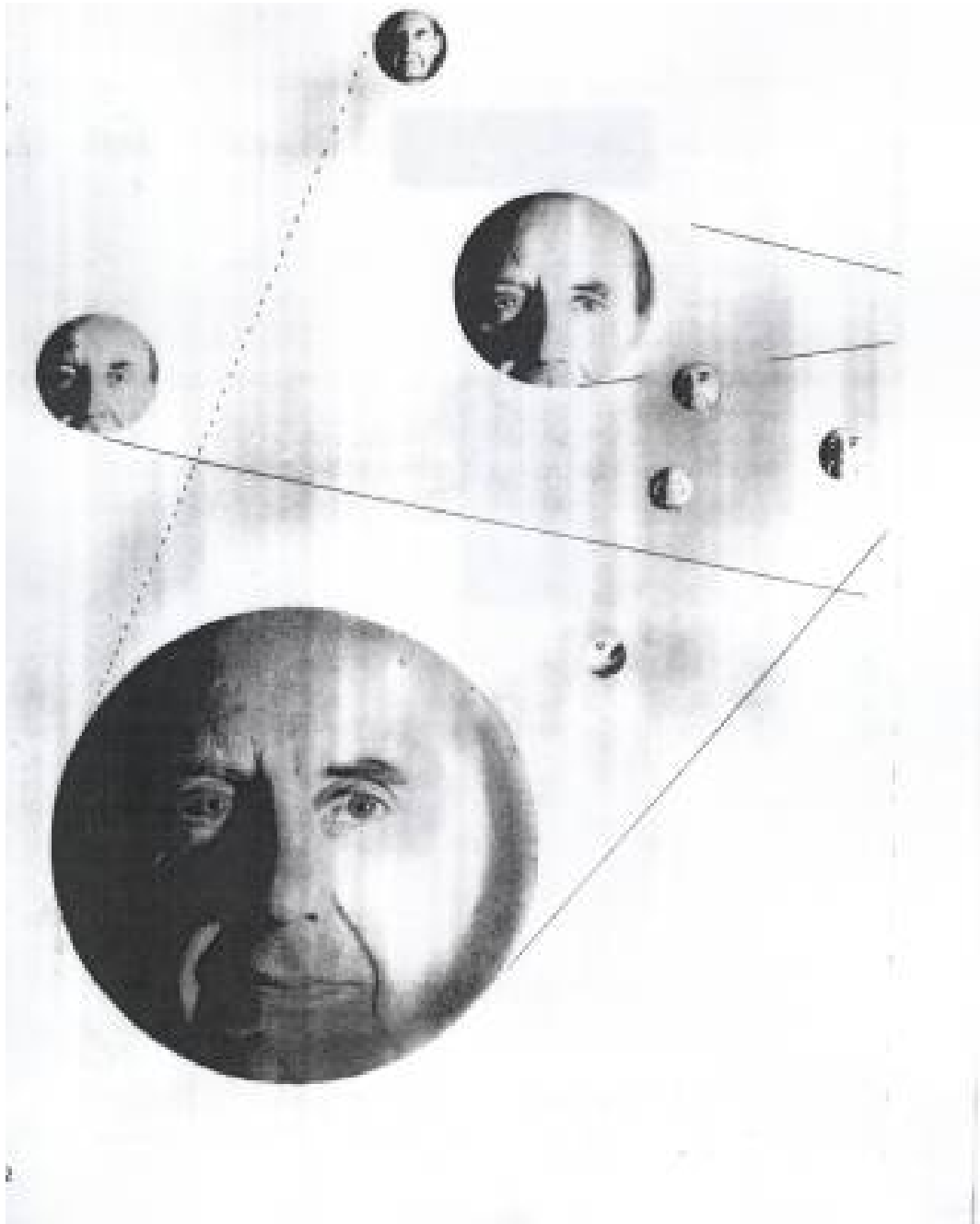


Fig. 89: Photomontage by Xanti Schawinsky
Source: T.M., "Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara," *Nueva Visión*
no. 5 (1954): 22.

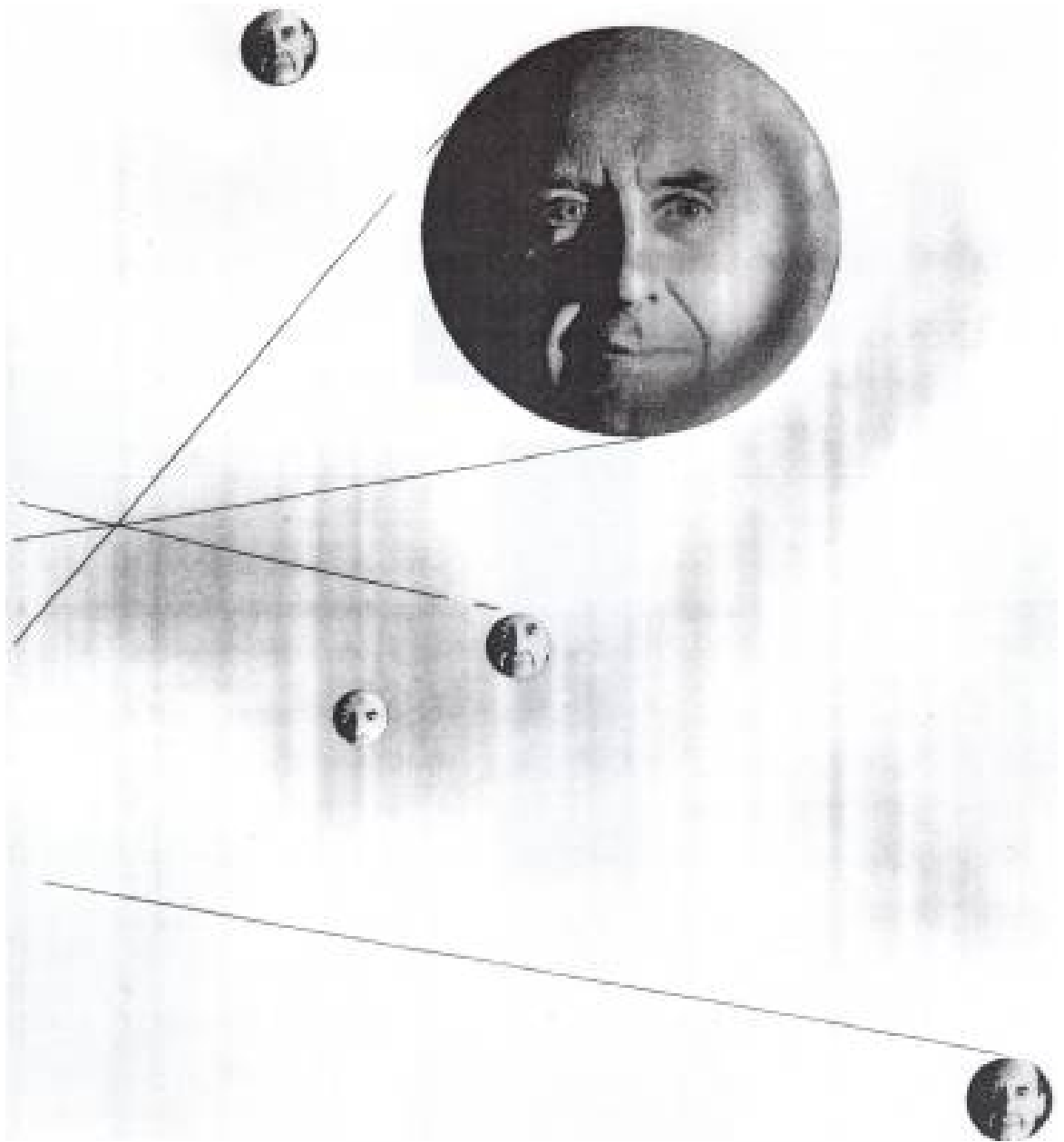


Fig. 90: Photomontage by Xanti Schawinsky
Source: T.M., "Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara," *Nueva Visión*
no. 5 (1954): 23.



Fig. 91: Tomás Maldonado, *Una forma y series*, ca. 1954, oil on canvas

Source: Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, 145. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 37.

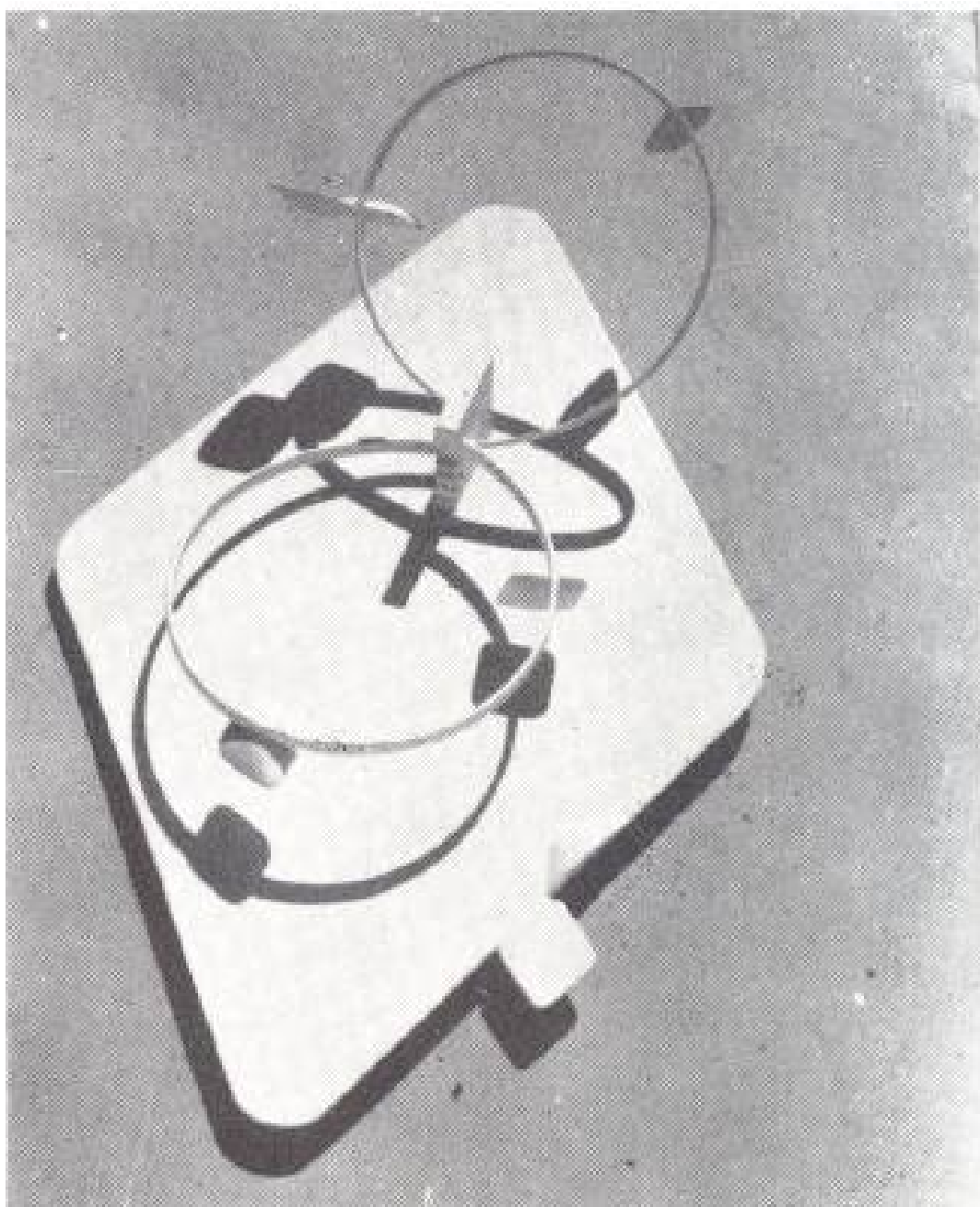


Fig. 92: Gyula Kosice, *Proyecto para una construcción en aeropuerto o avenida de Buenos Aires*, ca. 1954, wood.

Source: Squirru, *Kosice*, 22. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 33.



Fig. 93: Aerial view of Buenos Aires in the mid-1950s.
Source: Klappenbach and Stern, *Buenos Aires*, n.p.

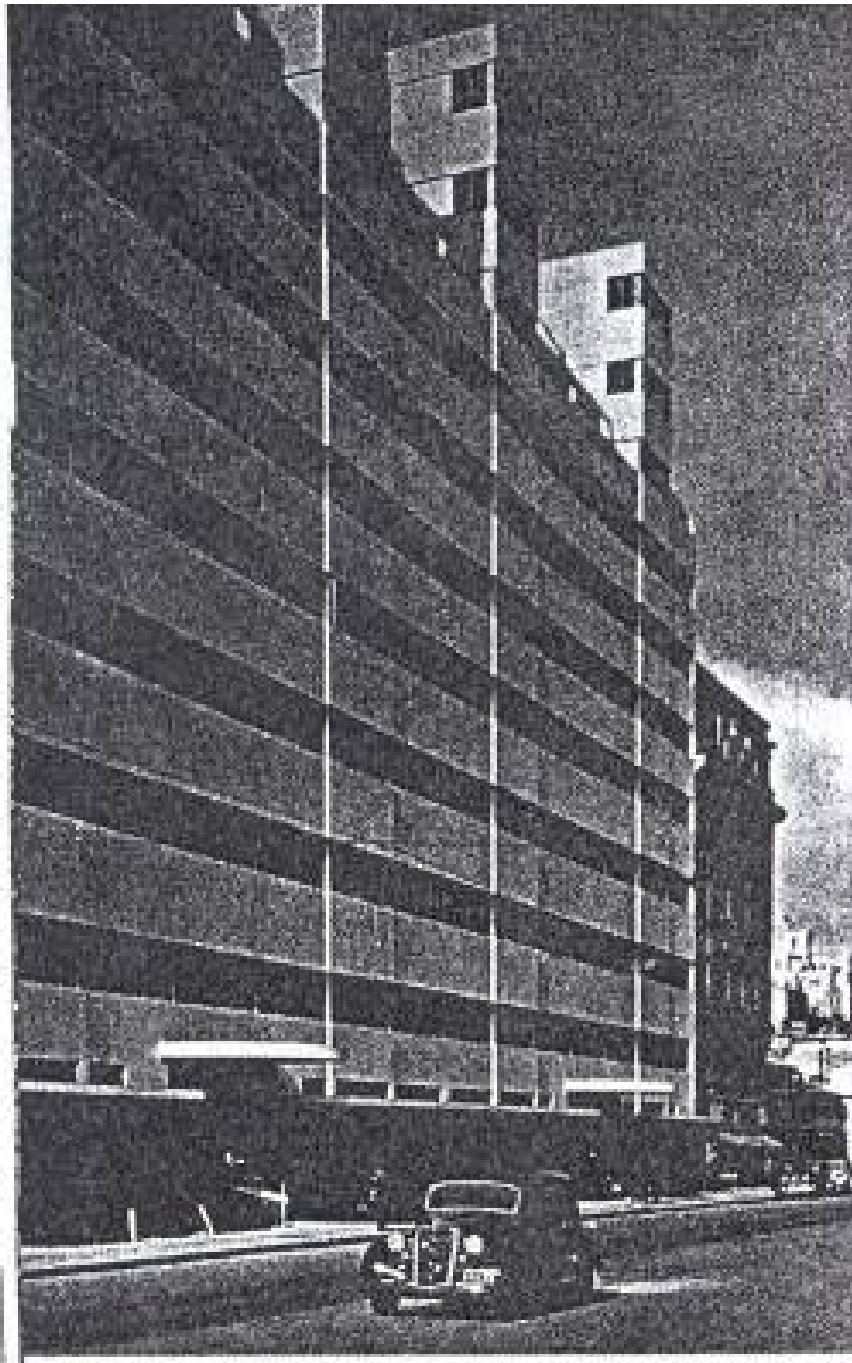


Fig. 94: R. Birabén and E. Lacalle, *Edificio de Oficinas*, Buenos Aires, 1930s

Source: Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del Siglo XX*, 206



Fig. 95: Antonio Vilar, *Hospital Churrucá*, Buenos Aires, 1930s.
Source: Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del Siglo XX*, 213.



Fig. 96: W. Acosta and F. Bereterbide, El Hogar Obrero, Buenos Aires, 1930s

Source: Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del Siglo XX*, 225.



Fig. 97: Ministerio de Obras Públicas, Buenos Aires, built in 1937.
Source: Liemur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del Siglo XX*, 194.



Fig. 98: Pavillions on Aycote and Ambrosetti Avenues, Buenos Aires,
1949-1952

Source: Ballent, "Las huellas de la política," 698.



Fig. 99: Monoblock General Belgrano, Buenos Aires, 1949-1952
Source: Ballent, “Las huellas de la política,” 702.



Fig. 100: View of Ezeiza Airport in Buenos Aires, photograph taken in mid-1950s.

Source: Klappenbach and Stern, *Buenos Aires*, n.p.



Fig. 101: View of Ezeiza Airport in Buenos Aires, photograph taken in mid-1950s.

Source: Klappenbach and Stern, *Buenos Aires*, n.p.



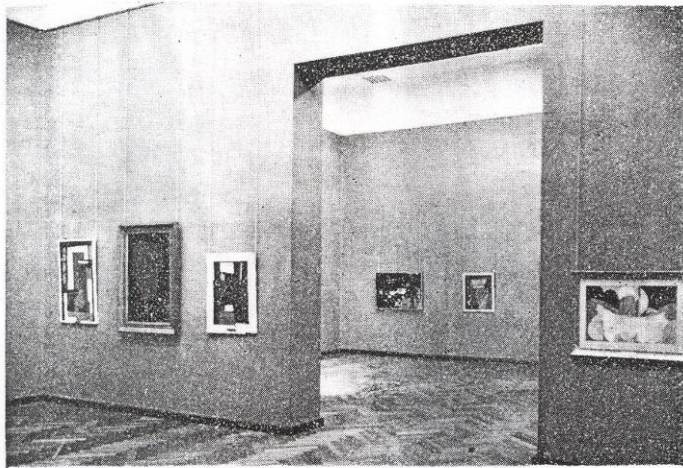
Fig. 102: View of Barrio 17 de Octubre, located at intersection of General Paz Avenue and Ricchieri Avenue in Buenos Aires, photograph, mid-1950s.

Source: Klappenbach and Stern, *Buenos Aires*, n.p.

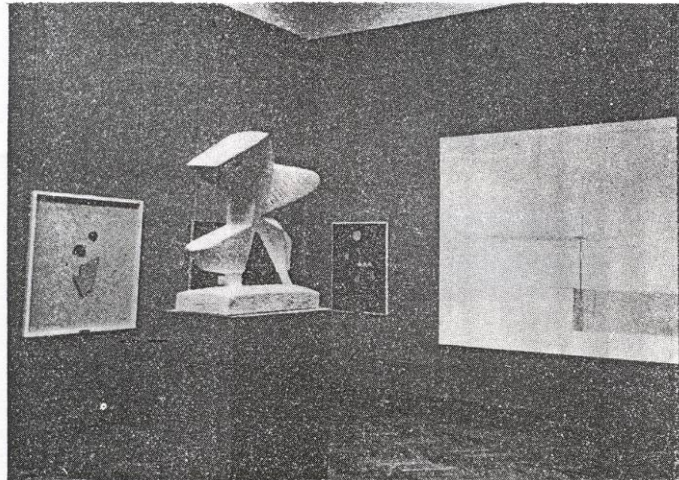


Fig. 103: Sesostris Vitullo, *Eva Perón, arquetipo símbolo*, 1952, stone de gard

Source: <http://www.proa.org/exhibicion/vitullo/sala1/1.html>



SALA XXII: "Gran óvalo" de A. Vainstein, "Armonía en verde" y "Ritmo" de Martín Blascko y "Trópico triste" de Anita Payró.

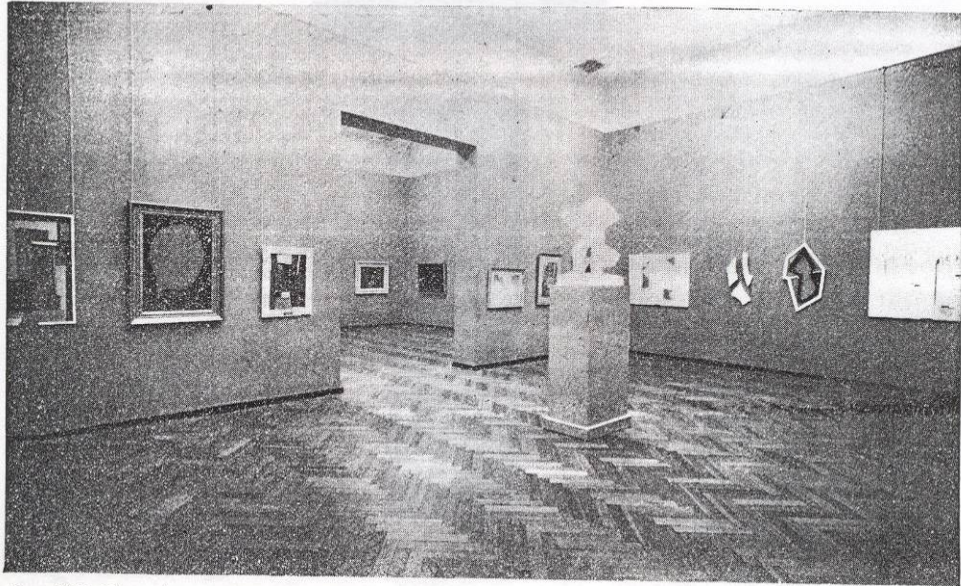


SALA XXII: "Objeto, pintura" de Raúl Lozza, "Pintura" de José A. Fernández Muro, "Pintura" de Dustir Wilma y "Desarrollo de 14 temas" de Tomás Maldonado. Escultura: "El pájaro" de Pablo Curatella Manes.

55

Fig. 104: Concrete works as exhibited in show *La Pintura y la Escultura Argentina de este Siglo*, held at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, 1952

Source: *La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de Este Siglo*, 55.



SALA XXII: "Armonía en verde" y "Ritmo" de Martín Blaszkó, "Gran óvalo" de A. Vainstein, "Temple" y "Trópico triste" de Anita Payró, "Pintura" de Miguel Ocampo, "Ecuación de tres planos blancos" de Giulia Kosice, "Pintura Madí" de Aníbal J. Biedma y "Serie cromática" de Alfredo Hlito.

Fig. 105: Madí works as exhibited in show *La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de este Siglo*, held at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, 1952

Source: *La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de Este Siglo*, 56.

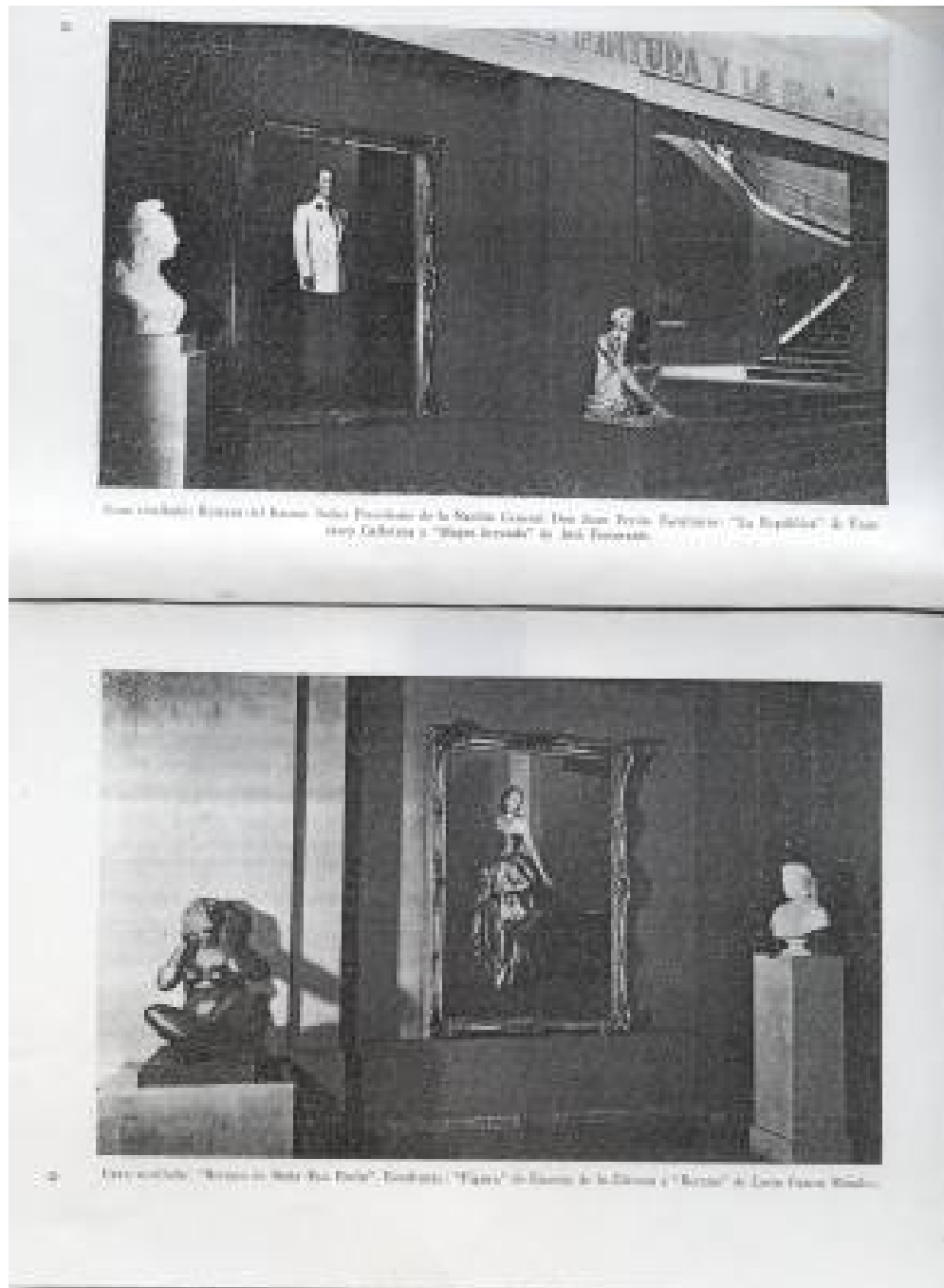


Fig. 106: Portraits of Perón and Eva Perón, as displayed in entrance hall at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, in show *La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de este Siglo*, Buenos Aires, 1952
 Source: *La Pintura y Escultura Argentina de Este Siglo*, 8-9.



Sarah Grilo, Iommi, Maldonado y Giraldo.

El Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina, recientemente constituido sobre la base solidaria de cuatro artistas independientes, Aebi, Fernández-Muro, Sarah Grilo y Ocampo, y cinco artistas concretos, Giraldo, Iommi, Maldonado y Lidy Prati, ha realizado hace poco su primera exposición en la Galería Viau. Esta exposición, mejor que ninguna otra anterior de similar composición y propósitos, ha permitido al público entrever, con sobrada claridad, lo que sólo algunos, bastante osados o clarividentes, tenían ya conocimiento: la transformación radical que, desde hace unos años, merced al esfuerzo creador de estos artistas, se viene operando en el panorama de nuestras artes visuales. En efecto, parecería que, sorpresivamente, el viejo espejo cóncavo de la plástica argentina se hubiese quebrado; que la imagen deformada del "arte moderno", durante veinte años ofrecida a voz de cuello como buena, se hubiese esfumado furtivamente, para dar lugar a esta otra que nos traen los expositores de Viau, manifestación auténtica de la naturaleza intensamente problemática de las artes visuales de nuestro tiempo.

Aebi, Hlito y Ocampo.

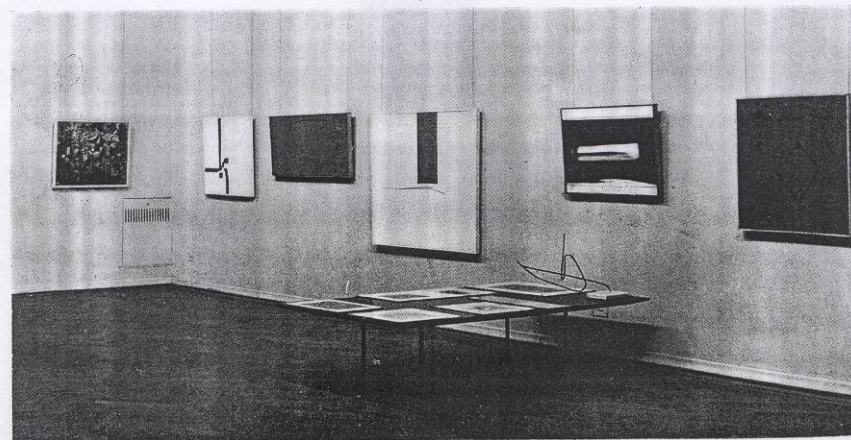


Fig. 107: Illustrated article reviewing shows of Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina. Shows took place in 1952 and 1953 in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Amsterdam.
Source: *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (Jan. 1953): 26.

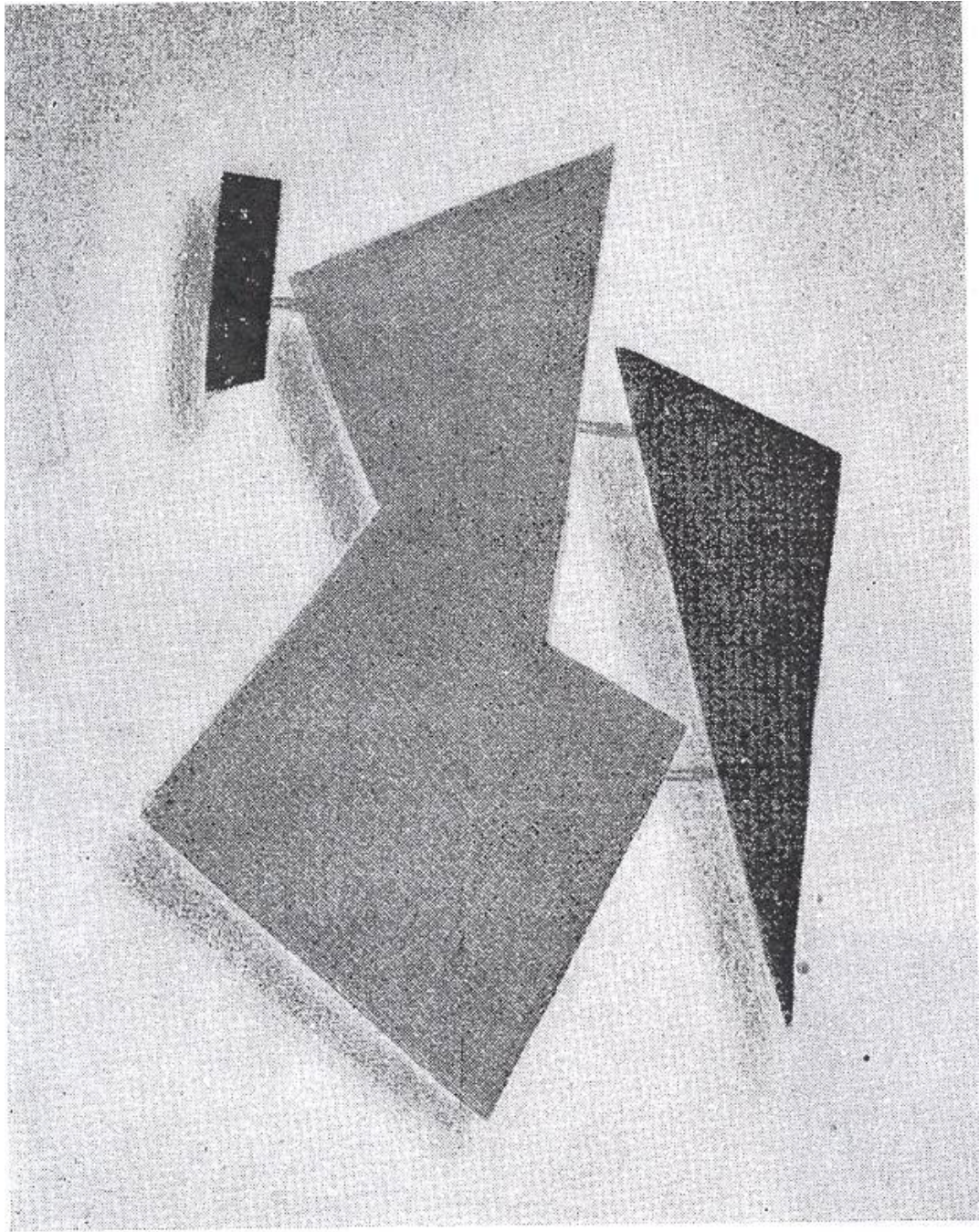


Fig. 108: Raúl Lozza, [untitled work], ca. 1946, whereabouts unknown

Source: *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 7. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in this publication.



Fig. 109: Esteban Eitler, *Preludio de las 4 bagatelas*, 1947.
 Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

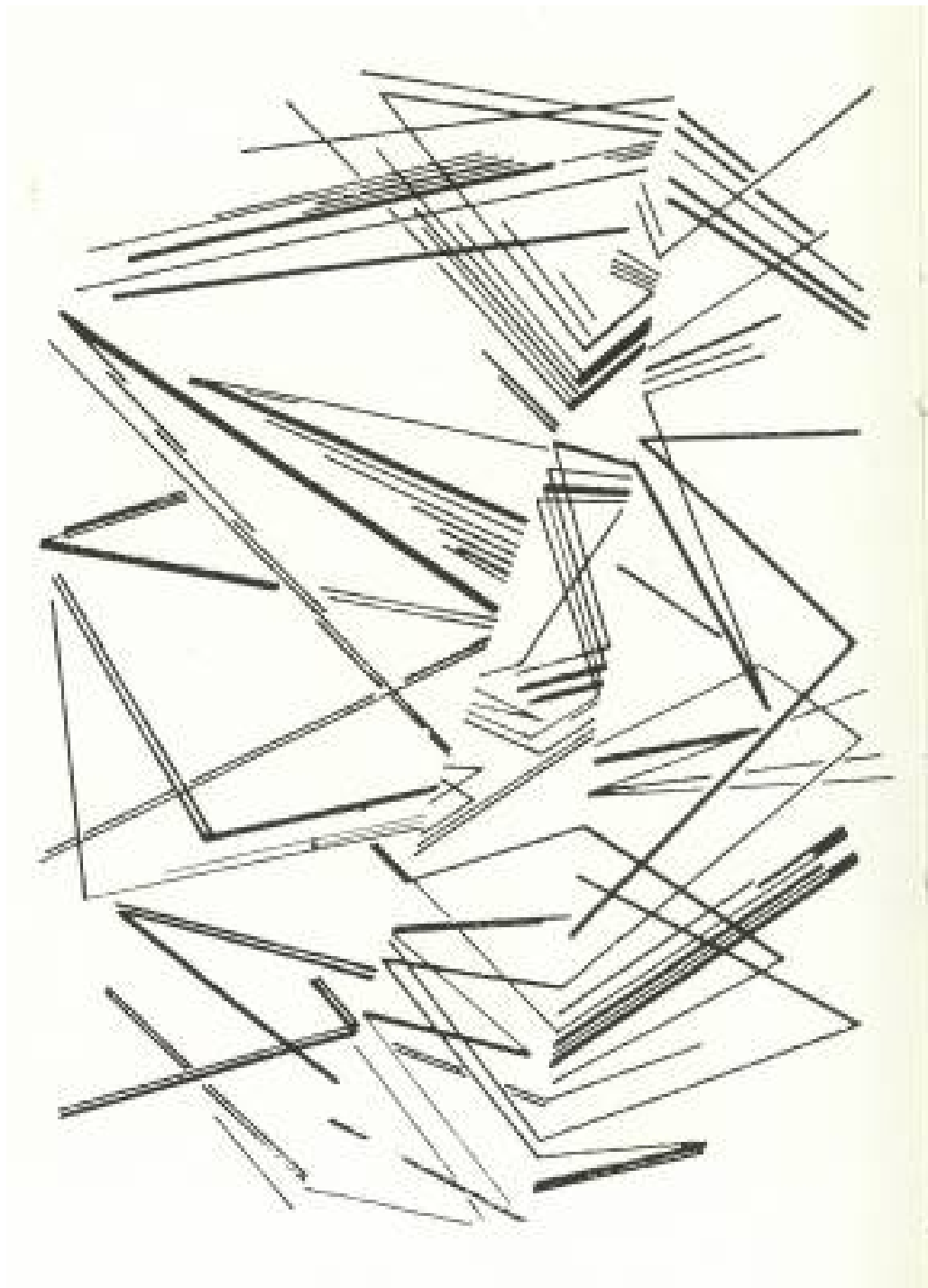
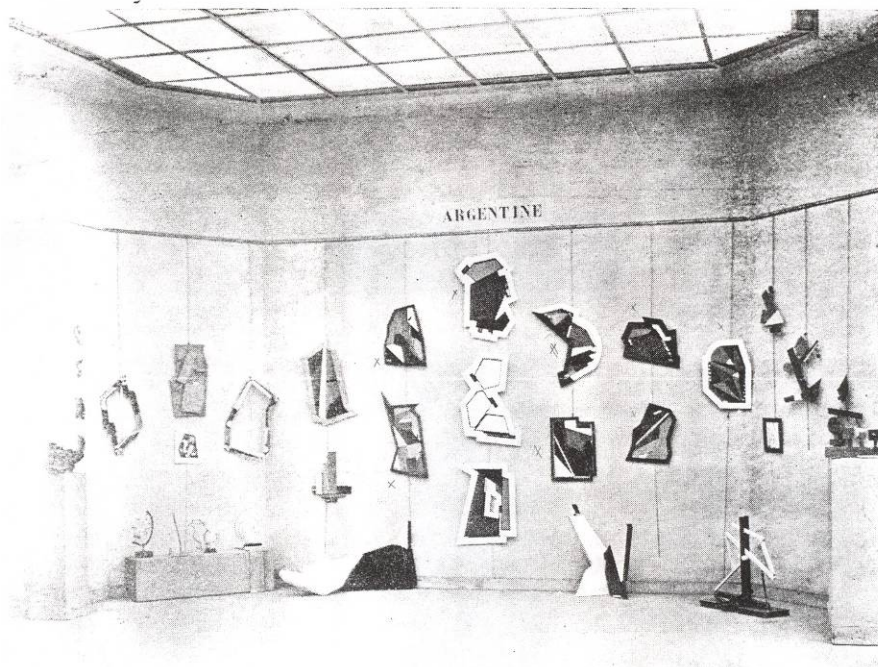


Fig. 110: Esteban Eitler, [untitled work], ca. 1947
Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.



VISTA DEL STAND DE MADI EN PARIS

En ocasión del tercer Salón de "Réalités Nouvelles" que organiza anualmente dicha institución, el movimiento Madí-nemisor representó a las corrientes de arte no-figurativo de la república Argentina y el Uruguay.

17 - países y 260 expositores intervinieron en dicha muestra que reflejó la extraordinaria vitalidad del arte abstracto-concreto internacional.

Obras de calidad de auténticos pintores y escultores no-figurativos, una organización perfecta y una dedicación a toda prueba, hicieron de esta exposición de París un gran suceso.

La comisión del Salón de "Réalités Nouvelles" se compone de los siguientes colegas:

Presidente Fundador: FREDO SIDES

Vicepresidente: A. HERBIN

Secretario general: A. F. DEL MARLE

Tesorero: H. M. BERARD

Miembros: J. ARP, DEWASNE, A. GLEIZES, GORIN
A. PEVSNER

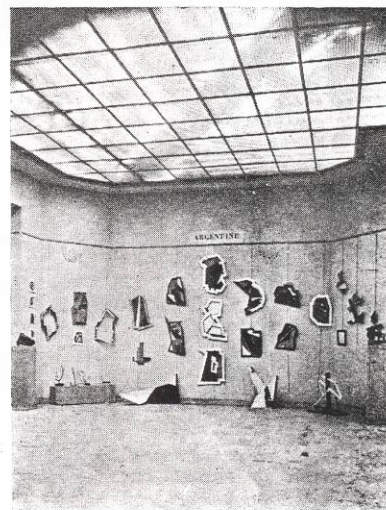


Fig. 111: Views of Madí works as displayed in the Salon de Realités Nouvelles, Paris, 1948

Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (1948): n.p.

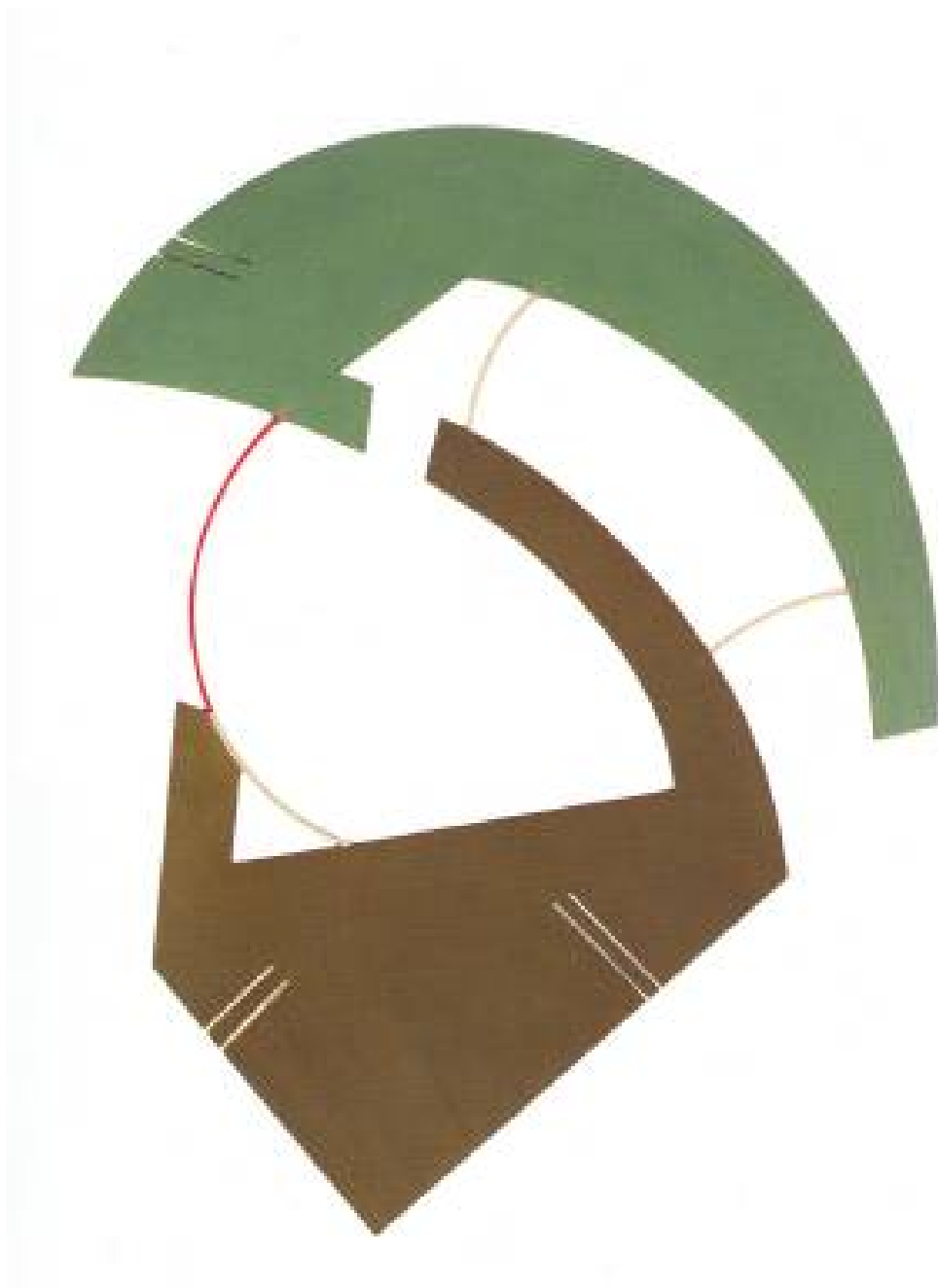


Fig. 112: Gyula Kosice, *Planos y Color Liberados*, ca. 1950, wood
Source: *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, cat. 44. Attributed date follows date
of reproduction in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 4 (1950): n.p.

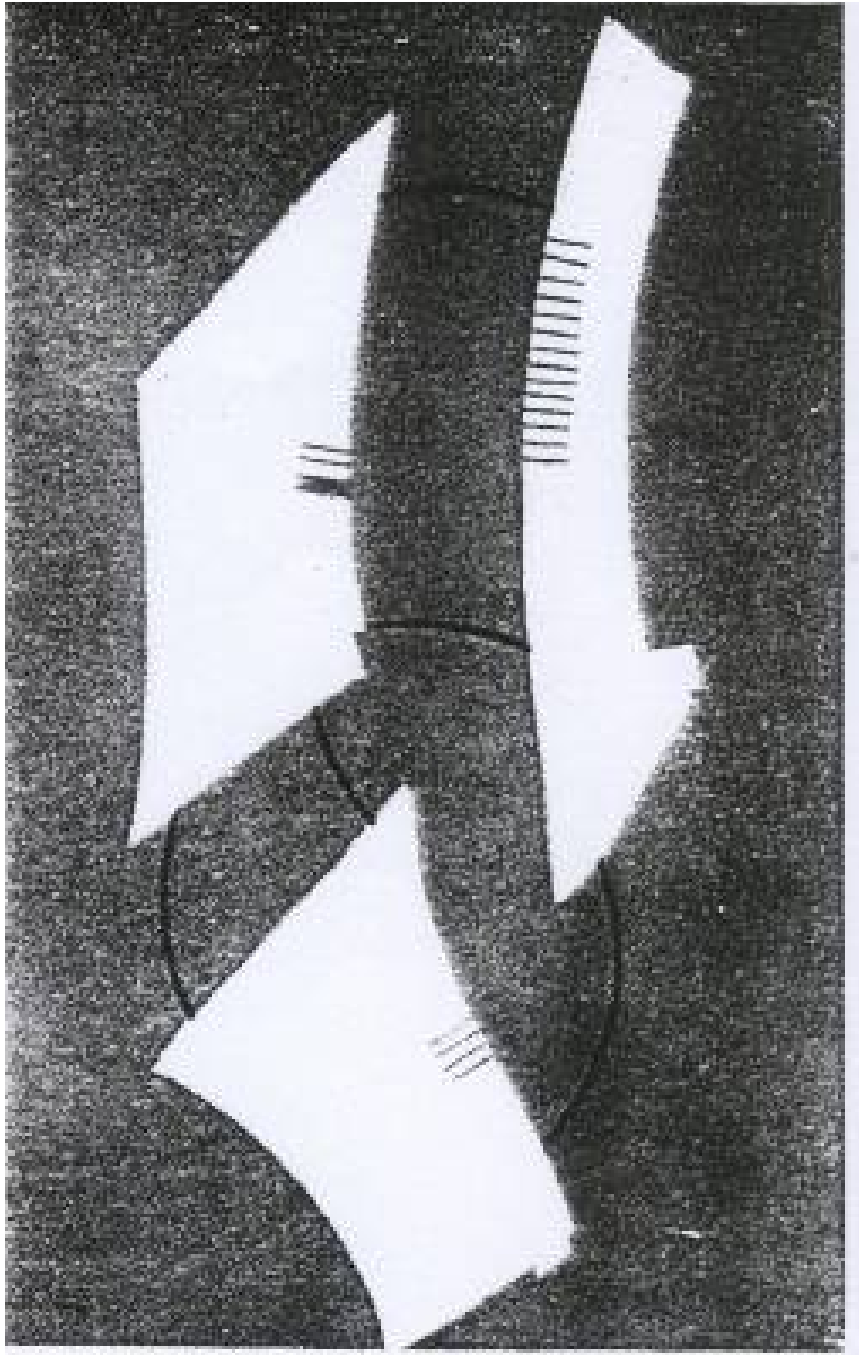


Fig. 113: Gyula Kosice, *Ecuación de Tres Planos Blancos*, ca. 1951,
whereabouts unknown

Source: *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p. Attributed date
follows date of reproduction in this publication.

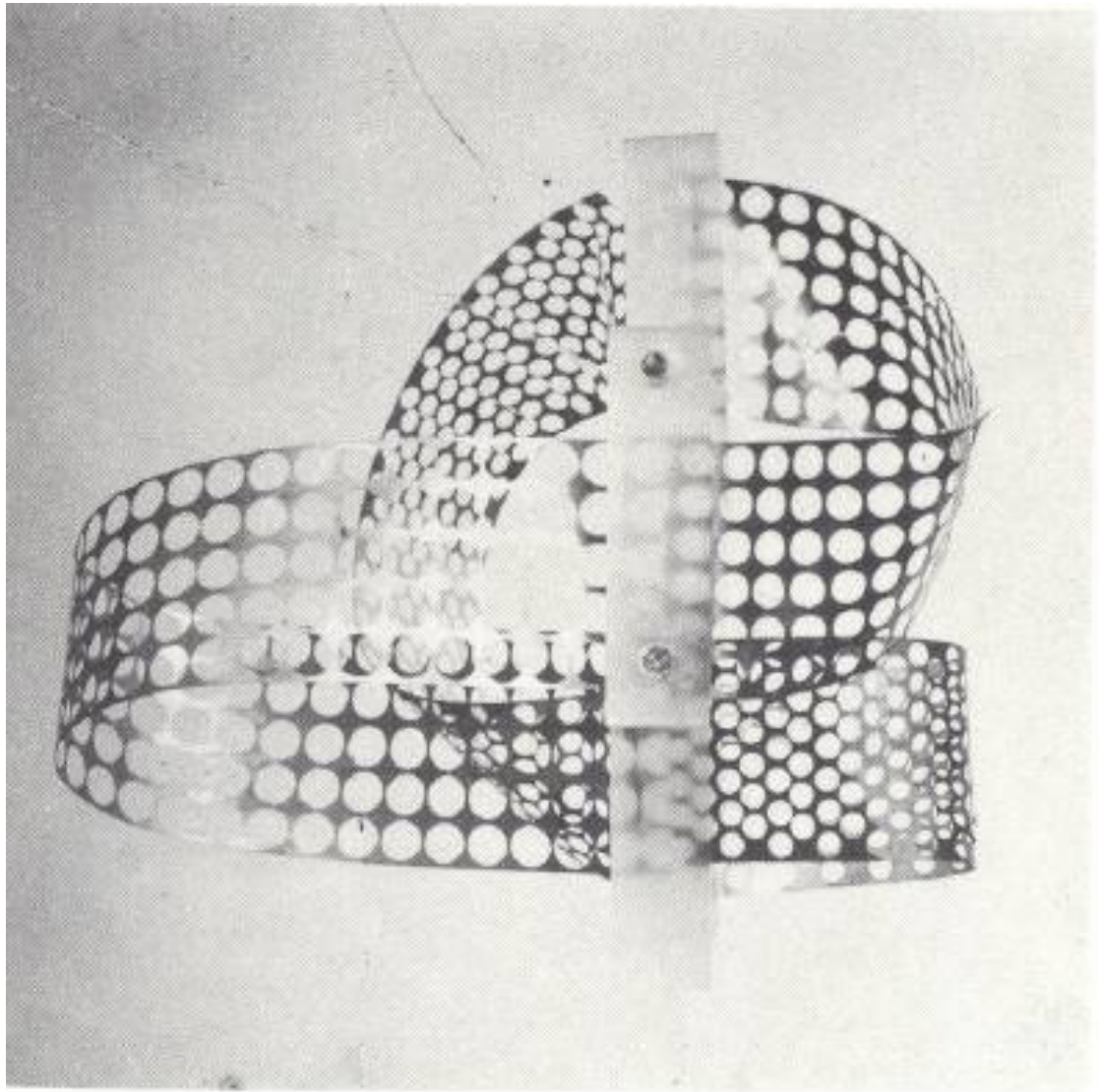


Fig. 114: Gyula Kosice, *Estudio para una profundidad en perforación*, ca. 1951, whereabouts unknown

Source: Squirru, *Kosice*, 21. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.

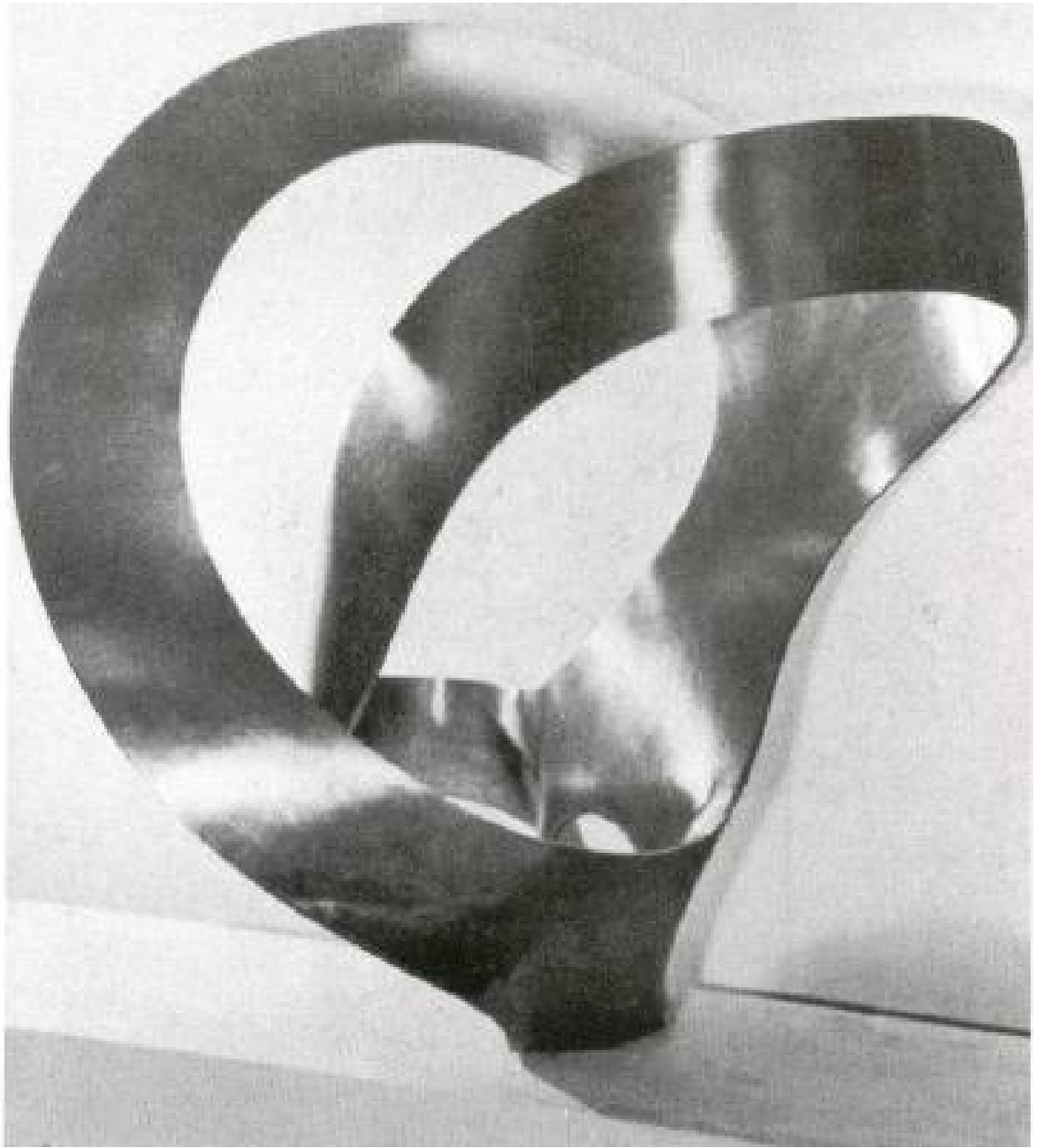


Fig. 115: Max Bill, *Tripartite Unity*, 1948, stainless steel
Source: <http://www.lacma.org/beyondgeometry/artworks1.html>

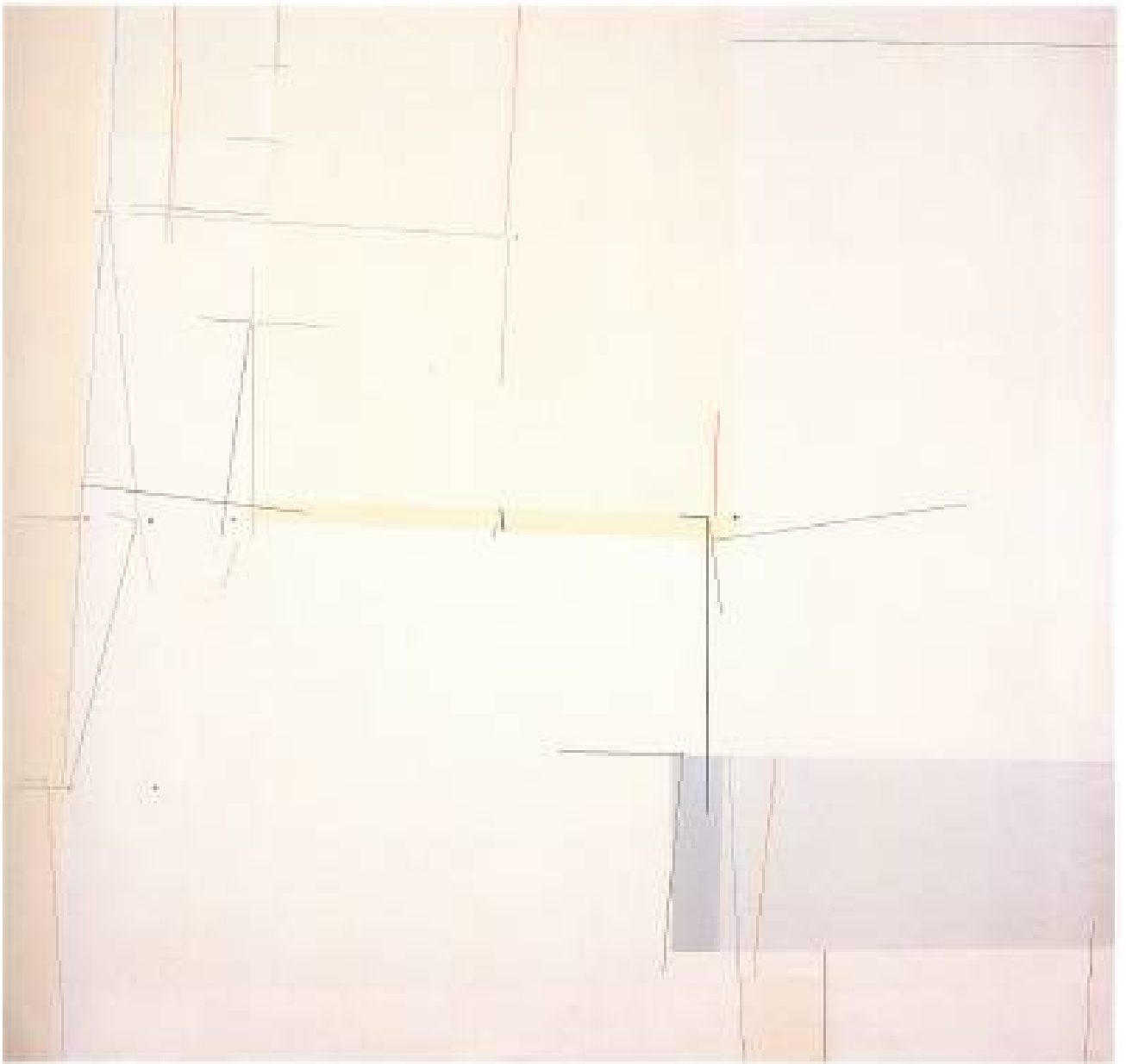


Fig. 116: Tomás Maldonado, *Desarrollo de 14 temas*, ca. 1952, oil on canvas

Source: *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata*, 117. Attributed date follows date of reproduction in *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (Jan. 1953): 26.

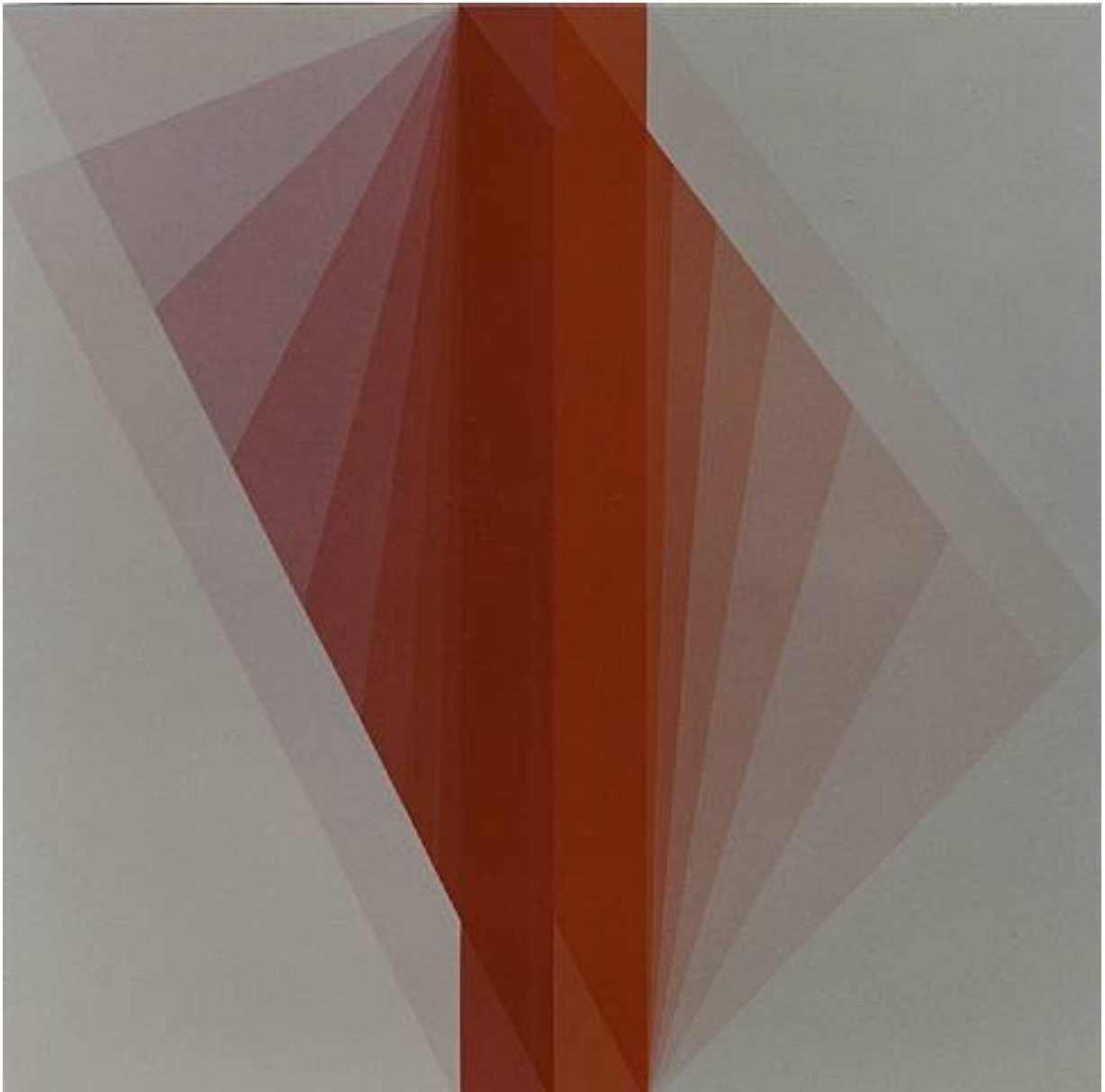


Fig. 117: Ary Brizzi, *Densidad 17*, 1998, acrylic on canvas
Source: <http://www.artnet.com/artwork/163718/69/ary-brizzi-densidad-17.html>

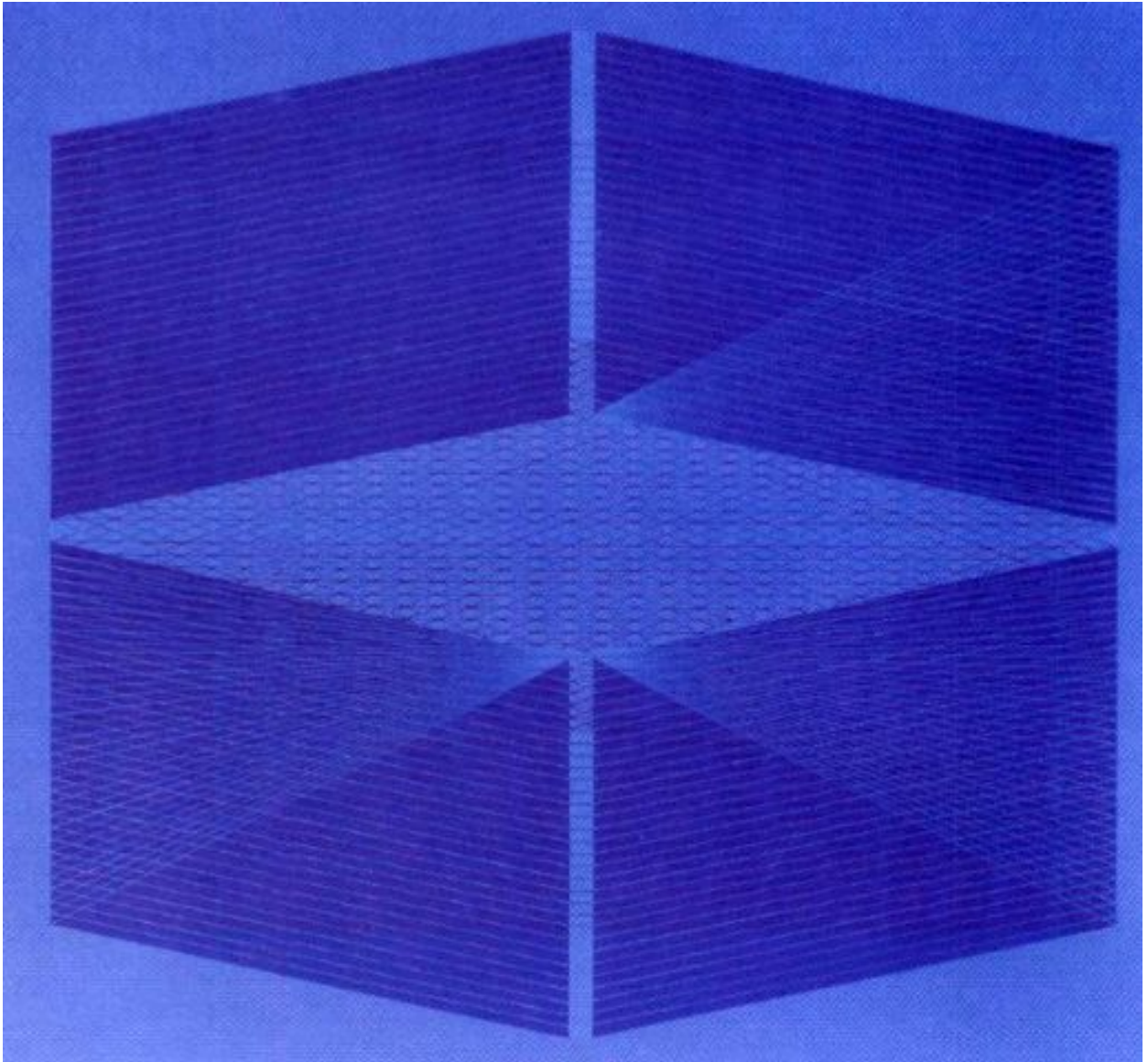


Fig. 118: Miguel Angel Vidal, *Desarrollo sobre planos*, 1969, acrylic on canvas

Source:

http://www.artnet.com/Artists/LotDetailPage.aspx?lot_id=852CB4A6EB649A39324D76C3F77829D7

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: Sources are classified as primary and secondary following their date of publication or release (before or after 1955).

Secondary Sources

“Electronic music.” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 1 Sep 2006, 02:31 UTC. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 1 Sep 2006 <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Electronic_music&oldid=73148882>.

“Entrevista a Tomás Maldonado, by Giacinto di Pietrantonio.” Reprinted in Tomás Maldonado, *Escritos Preulmianos*, 117-127. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Infinito, 1997.

“Entrevista a Tomás Maldonado, by Giacinto di Pietrantonio.” Reprinted and updated in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 59-63. Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002.

“Ramón Gómez de la Serna.” *Wikipedia, La enciclopedia libre*. 5 sep 2005; 21:34 UTC 1 feb 2006, 19:41 <http://es.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ram%C3%B3nG%C3%B3mez_de_la_Serna&oldid=1281247>.

Ades, Dawn. “Arte Madí/Arte Concreto-Invención.” In *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era, 1820-1980*, by Dawn Ades, with contributions by Guy Brett, Santon Loomis Catlin and Rosemary O’Neill, 241-45. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989.

Adorno, Theodor and Max Horkheimer, “The Culture industry: enlightenment as mass deception.” In *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002.

Alexander, Robert. *Communism in Latin America*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1957.

Altamirano, Carlos “América Latina en espejos argentinos.” In *Para un programa de historia intelectual, y otros ensayos*, 105-133. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores Argentina, 2005.

Althusser, Louis. “Ideology and Ideological state apparatuses: Notes towards an investigation [1969].” In *Lenin and Philosophy, and other essays*. Translated from

- the French by Ben Brewster. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971.
- Amaral, Aracy, "Abstract Constructivist trends in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia." In *Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century*, edited by Waldo Rasmussen, Fatima Bercht, and Elizabeth Ferrer, 86-99. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1993.
- Arden Quin: 12 de marzo a 4 de mayo 1997*. Madrid: Fundación de Arte y Tecnología, 1997.
- Arévalo, Oscar. *El Partido Comunista*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1983.
- Argentina Arte Concreto-Invención, 1945, Grupo Madí, 1946*. New York: Rachel Adler Gallery, 1990.
- Art from Argentina*. Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1994.
- Arte Abstracto Argentino*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2001.
- Arte Concreto-Invención/Arte Madí*. Basel: Galerie Von Bartha, 1991.
- Arte Madí Internacional*. Madrid: Editorial Godoy, 2000.
- Avellandea, Andrés. *El habla de la ideología: modos de réplica literaria en la Argentina contemporánea*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1983.
- Ballent, Anahí. "Las estéticas de la política: Arquitectura y ciudad. El peronismo en Buenos Aires 1946-1955." In *V Jornadas de Teoría e Historia de las Artes: Arte y Poder*, 116-25. Buenos Aires: CAIA, 1993.
- . "Las huellas de la política. Arquitectura, vivienda y ciudad en las propuestas del Peronismo: Buenos Aires, 1946-1955." Unpublished thesis. Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2003.
- . "Viviendas de Interés Social." In *Materiales para la historia de la arquitectura, el hábitat, y la ciudad en la Argentina*, by Anahí Ballent et. al., 228-230. La Plata: Universidad Nacional de la Plata, 1996.
- . *Las huellas de la política: vivienda, ciudad, peronismo en Buenos Aires, 1943-1955*. Bernal: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2005.

- Barthes, Roland. "Style and its Image." In *Literary Style: A Symposium*, edited and in part translated by Seymour Chatman, 3-15. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- _____. *Mythologies*. Selected and translated from the French by Annette Lavers. New York: Hill and Wang, 1972.
- Battiti, Florencia, and Cristina Rossi, "Inscripción del Arte Abstracto en en Río de la Plata," in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 195-206. Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002.
- Becerra Schmidt, Gustavo. "Los años cincuenta en la música de vanguardia en Chile. Impresiones de un compositor, cuarenta años después, como homenaje tardío a Esteban Eitler." *Revista Musical Chilena*, v. 51 no. 187 (Jan. 1997): 45-48.
- Borrás, María Luísa. "Abstracción Geométrica y Arte Madí." In *Arte Madí. Exposición organizada por el Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, 14-21. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 1997.
- Bottaro, Raúl. *La edición de libros en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Troquel, 1964.
- Brett, Guy. "A radical leap." In *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era, 1820-1980*, 253-283. By Dawn Ades, with contributions by Guy Brett, Santon Loomis Catlin and Rosemary O'Neill. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Calderari, María y Martín Marcos. "Fundación y refundación de la Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo (1947-1966)." *Contextos. 50 años de la FADU-UBA*. Buenos Aires, FADU-UBA (Oct. 1997): 12-18.
- Cano, Daniel. *La educación superior en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Editorial FLACSO/GEL, 1989.
- Ceselli, Juan José. *Poesía Argentina de Vanguardia: Surrealismo e Invencionismo*. Buenos Aires: Dirección General de Relaciones Culturales–Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1964.
- Chierico, Osiris. *Reportaje a una anticipación*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Taller Libre, 1979.
- Ciria, Alberto. *Política y cultura popular: la Argentina peronista, 1946-1955*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor, 1983.

- De Brill, Rosa M. "Hlito." *Pintores Argentinos del Siglo XX* no. 43. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1981.
- De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- De Maistre, Agnés. *Carmelo Arden Quin*. Nice: Demaistre, 1996.
- . "Les groupes Arte Concreto-Invencción et Madí." In *Art d'Amérique latine, 1911-1968*, 336-348. Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 1992.
- . "Qu'est-ce que Madí?" *Madí: L'art sud-américain*, 8-42. Paris: Musée de Grenoble, 2002.
- De Zuleta, Emilia. *Espanoles en la Argentina: el exilio literario de 1936*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Atril, 1999.
- . *Relaciones literarias entre España y la Argentina*. Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica del Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, 1983.
- Falcoff, Mark, and Ronald Dolkart. *Prologue to Perón: Argentina in Depression and War, 1930-1943*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- Falcoff, Mark. "Intellectual currents." In *Prologue to Perón: Argentina in Depression and War, 1930-1943*, edited by Mark Falcoff and Ronald H. Dolkart, 110-135. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- . "Raúl Scalabrini Ortiz and the making of an Argentine Nationalist." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 52, 1 (Feb. 1972): 74-101.
- Fayt, Carlos. *Naturaleza del Peronismo*. Buenos Aires: Viracocha, 1967.
- Ford, Aníbal, Jorge B. Rivera, and Eduardo Romano. *Medios de comunicación y cultura popular*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1985.
- Galleti, Alfredo. *La realidad argentina en el siglo XX: la política y los partidos*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961.
- García Canclini, Néstor. *Culturas Híbridas*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1992.
- García Sebastiani, Marcela. *Los antiperonistas en la Argentina peronista: radicales y socialistas en la política argentina entre 1943 y 1951*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2005.

- García, Eustasio Antonio. *Evolución histórica de nuestra industria editorial*. Buenos Aires: Biblioteca Franklin, 1965.
- García, María Amalia. "Concretismo Regional: formas de intercambio entre Argentina y Brasil." Paper presented at the symposium The Geometry of Hope: Latin American art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, Blanton Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, February 17, 2007.
- . "Diseñando el progreso. Ignacio Pirovano en la promoción y difusión del diseño industrial." In *IV Jornadas Estudios e Investigaciones*. Buenos Aires: Instituto de Teoría e Historia de las artes "Julio E. Payró", 2000.
- . "El diseño de una colección: Tomás Maldonado e Ignacio Pirovano en la representación del arte concreto." In *Poderes de la Imágen*, IX Jornadas de Teoría e Historia de las Artes, Centro Argentino de Investigadores en Arte. Buenos Aires: CAIA, 2001.
- . "Entre Argentina y Brasil. Episodios en la formación de una abstracción regional." In *Arte de Posguerra: Jorge Romero Brest y la Revista Ver y Estimar*, 137-152. Edited by Andrea Giunta y Laura Malosetti Costa. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2005.
- . "La construcción del arte abstracto. Impactos e interconexiones entre el internacionalismo cultural paulista y la escena artística argentina, 1949-1953." In *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del siglo XX: sus interrelaciones*, 15-54. Buenos Aires, Fundación Telefónica – FIAAR, 2004.
- . "La ilusión concreta: un recorrido a través de *nueva visión*. revista de cultura visual, 1951-1957." In *Leer las artes. Las Artes Plásticas en ocho revistas culturales argentinas - 1878-1951*. Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires; Facultad de Filosofía y Letras; Instituto de Teoría e Historia del Arte "Julio E. Payró", 2002.
- Gené, Marcela. *Un mundo feliz. Imágenes de los trabajadores en el primer peronismo. 1946-1955*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005.
- Geo-Metrías: Abstracción Geométrica Latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*. Buenos Aires: MALBA, 2003.
- Geometric Abstraction: Latin American art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Art Museums, 2001.
- Giunta, Andrea. "Crónica de Posguerra: Lucio Fontana en Buenos Aires." In *Fontana: Obras Maestras de la Colección Lucio Fontana de Milán*, 72-87. Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 1999.

- . “Nacionales y Populares: los salones del peronismo.” In *Tras los Pasos de la Norma*, coordinated by Marta Penhos and Diana Weschler, 153-190. Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Jilguero, 1999.
- . *Vanguardia, internacionalismo y política. Arte argentino en los años 60*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2001.
- Giussani, Pablo. *Montoneros: la soberbia armada*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana/Planeta, 1984.
- Goodman, Shelley. *Carmelo Arden Quin: When Art Jumped Out of Its Cage*. Dallas, TX: Madí, 2004.
- Gradowczyk, Mario H., and Nelly Perazzo. “Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953.” In *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953*, 15-69. New York: The Americas Society, 2001.
- Gradowczyk, Mario. “Arte Concreto-Invención; Madí: The awakening of the Avant-Garde.” In *Argentina Arte Concreto-Invención, 1945, Grupo Madí*, 1946, n.p. New York: Rachel Adler Gallery, 1990.
- Greenberg, Clement. *Art and culture: critical essays*. Boston: Beacon Books, 1961.
- Grete Stern: *Obra Fotográfica en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 1995.
- Guerín, Néstor. “Esteban Eitler, un gran músico olvidado.” *LAMúsica* Latin American Music Center v. 6 no. 2 (Feb. 2004). <http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/lamc/publications/lamusica/vol6.2/E-book.htm>
- Gutierrez, Ramón, and Margarita Gutman, eds. *Vivienda: Ideas y Contradicciones, De las Casas Baratas a la Erradicación de las Villas de Emergencia*. Buenos Aires: Instituto Argentino de Investigaciones de Historia de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, 1988.
- Haag, Carlos. “Entrevista de 1977 com Hans Joachin [sic.] Koellreutter.” *O Estado de São Paulo* 17/9/2005. http://www.movimento.com/site_movimento/mostraconteudo.asp?mostra=2&escolha=6&codigo=3016
- Halperin Dongui, Tulio. *El revisionismo histórico argentino*. Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, S.A., 1971.

- Hebdige, Dick. *Subculture: the meaning of style*. London: Methuen, 1979.
- Hernández, Carmen. "Más allá de la exotización y la sociologización del arte latinoamericano." In *Estudios y otra prácticas intelectuales latinoamericanas en Cultura y Poder*, 167-176. Coordinated by Daniel Mandato. Caracas: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), 2002.
- King, John. *Sur: a study of the Argentine literary journal and its role in the development of a culture, 1931-1970*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Kosice, Gyula. *Arte Madí*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1982.
- _____. Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).
- Klappenbach, Horacio Raúl. *Buenos Aires*. Photographs by Grete Stern. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Peuser, 1956.
- Lafleur, Héctor René. *Las revistas literarias argentinas, 1893-1967 (edición corregida y aumentada)*. Buenos Aires: CEAL, 1968.
- Larra, Raúl. *Leónidas Barletta, El hombre de la campana*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Conducta, 1978.
- Laudano, Claudia. "Carmelo Arden Quin: Estética y ascética de un Madí," *Art Nexus* no. 47 (Jan-Mar 2003): 60-65.
- Lauría, Adriana. "Arte Abstracto en la Argentina: Intermitencia e Instauración." In *Arte Abstracto Argentino*. 22-47. Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002.
- Lemoine, Serge. "Nouveau monde." In *Art d'Amérique latine, 1911-1968*, 306-307. Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 1992.
- Liemur, Jorge Francisco. *Arquitectura en la Argentina del siglo XX: La construcción de la modernidad*. Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 2003).
- Longoni, Ana, and Daniela Lucena. "De cómo el "júbilo creador" se trastocó en "desfachatez". El pasaje de Maldonado y los concretos por el Partido Comunista, 1945-1948." *Políticas de la Memoria: Anuario de Investigación e Información del CeDInCi (Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Cultura de Izquierdas en la Argentina)* no. 4 (Summer 2003/2004): 117-125.
- Lozza, Raúl. Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).

- Luna, Félix. *Perón y su tiempo. Tomo 1: La Argentina era una fiesta*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1987.
- Malba: *Museo Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Pettoruti, 2001.
- Mangone, Carlos, and Jorge Warley. *El manifiesto: un género entre el arte y la política*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 1993.
- _____. *Universidad y peronismo*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1984.
- Maranca, Lucía, ed., trans. *Cartas a J. C. Paz*. La Lucila, Pcia. de Buenos Aires, República Argentina: Agrupación Nueva Música, 1987.
- Markez, Iñaki. "Angel Garma: de Bilbao a los orígenes y desarrollo del psicoanálisis argentino." *Norte de Salud Mental* no. 17 (2003): 68-73.
- Melé, Juan. *La vanguardia del 40 en Argentina: memorias de un artista concreto*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Cinco, 1999.
- Méndez Mosquera, Carlos. Interview with the author (Buenos Aires) (May 2004).
- Navarro Gerassi, Marysa. *Los Nacionalistas*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Jorge Alvarez, 1968.
- Neiburg, Federico. *Los intelectuales y la invención del Peronismo: estudios de antropología social y cultural*. Buenos Aires: Alianza Editorial, 1998.
- Nist, John. *The Modernist movement in Brazil: a literary study*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967.
- Ordaz, Luis. "Leónidas Barletta: "hombre de teatro." <http://www.teatrodelpueblo.org.ar/dramaturgia/ordaz003.htm>
- O'Shaughnessy, Michael, and Jane Stadler. *Media and Society: an introduction*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Pacheco, Marcelo. "Introducción." In *MALBA: Museo Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires*, 15-39. Edited by Marcelo Pacheco. Buenos Aires: Fundación Pettoruti, 2001.
- _____. "Travesías del arte no-figurativo en el Río de la Plata: experiencias de una vanguardia ex-céntrica, 1914-1955." In *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 17-21. Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2002.

- Pellegrini, Aldo, *Panorama de la Pintura Argentina Contemporánea*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1967.
- Penhos, Martha, and Diana Weschler, eds. *Tras los pasos de la norma: Salones Nacionales de Bellas Artes (1911-1989)*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Jilguero, 1989.
- Perazzo, Nelly. *El Arte Concreto en la Argentina en la Década del 40*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1983.
- Pérez, Alberto Julián. *Los dilemas políticos de la cultura letrada: Argentina, Siglo XIX*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Corregidor, 2002.
- Pérez-Barreiro, Gabriel. "Arte Madí/Concreto-Invención, 1944-1950: The negation of all melancholy." In *Art from Argentina, 1920-1994*, edited by David Elliot, 54-65. Oxford: The Museum of Modern Art, 1994.
- _____. "Introduction." In *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, 13-15. Austin: Blanton Museum of Art and Fundación Cisneros, 2007.
- _____. "The Argentine avant-garde, 1944-1950," PhD diss., University of Essex, 1990.
- Plotkin, Mariano. "Perón y el Peronismo: un ensayo bibliográfico." http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/II_1/plotkin.htm.
- _____. *Mañana es San Perón: a cultural history of Peronist Argentina*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2003.
- _____. *Mañana es San Perón: propaganda, rituales políticos y educación en el régimen peronista (1946-1955)*. Buenos Aires: Ariel Historia Argentina, 1993.
- Poppino, Rollie. *International Communism in Latin America*. New York: The Free Press, 1967.
- Pozzi-Harris, Ana. "Thinking about the Cisneros Research Seminar in Abstraction and Contemporary Art," unpublished manuscript, Spring 2005.
- Priamo, Luis. "La obra de Grete Stern en la Argentina." In *Grete Stern: Obra Fotográfica en la Argentina*, by Grete Stern, 12-37. Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 1995.
- Puiggrós, Adriana, y Jorge Luis Bernetti. *Peronismo: cultura política y educación, 1945-1955*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Galerna, 1993.

- Rachum, Ilan. "Origins and Historical Significance of Día de la Raza." *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* no. 76 (Apr. 2004): 61-81.
- Ramírez, Mari Carmen, ed. *El Taller Torres-García: The School of the South and its legacy*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992.
- _____. "Vital Structures: The Constructive Nexus in South America." In *Inverted Utopias: Avant-garde art in Latin America*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.
- _____. *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar, 1918-1968*. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2000.
- Ramos, Jorge Abelardo. *Breve historia de la izquierda en la argentina*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1990.
- Rappaport, Mario. "Argentina." In *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War*, edited by Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Real, Juan José. *30 años de historia argentina: acción política y experiencia histórica*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Actualidad, 1962.
- Rela, Walter. *Medio siglo de poesía brasileña, 1922-1972: modernismo y experimentalismo, noticia y manifiesto*. Montevideo: Instituto de Cultura Uruguaio-Brasileiro, 2004.
- Rivera, Jorge B.. *El escritor y la industria cultural*. Buenos Aires: Atuel, 1998.
- _____. *Madí y la vanguardia argentina*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1976.
- Rock, David. "Argentina, 1930-1946," and "Argentina since 1946." In *The Cambridge History of Latin America*. v. 8: *Latin America since 1930: Spanish and South America*, edited by Leslie Bethel, 3-93. Cambridge, England; NY: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- _____. *Authoritarian Argentina: the Nationalist movement, its history and its impact*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- Romero Brest, Jorge. *Jorge Romero Brest, Escritos I (1928-1939)*. Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2004.

Romero, Luis Alberto. "Una empresa cultural: los libros baratos." In *Sectores populares: cultura y política. Buenos Aires en la entreguerra*, by Leandro H. Gutierrez and Luis Alberto Romero, 45-67. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1995.

Rossi, Cristina. "Confluencia de intereses. La galería Krayd como punto de encuentro." *IV Jornadas de Investigación en Arte y Arquitectura en Argentina*, Universidad Nacional de La Plata (2006): 1-11.

—. "En clave de polémica. Discusiones por la abstracción en los tiempos del peronismo." *Separata*, Centro de Investigaciones del Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano, Universidad Nacional de Rosario, v. VI n. 11 (Nov. 2006): 35-55

—. "En el fuego cruzado entre el realismo y la abstracción." In *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del siglo XX, sus interrelaciones*, 85-125. Buenos Aires, Fundación Telefónica – FIAAR, 2004.

—. "Los nuevos de entonces. El crítico Romero Brest y la abstracción argentina y brasileña." *Concinnitas: Revista do Instituto de Artes de la Uerj y la Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro* v. 6, n. 7 (Dec. 2004): 7-31

—. "Torres-García en el Buenos Aires de los primeros cuarenta. Acerca de la circulación de la obra *torresgarciana* antes de la aparición de la revista *Arturo*," *Latin American Studies Association* (2004): 1-19

—. "Una pulseada por la abstracción. Jorge Romero Brest entre Margherita Sarfatti y Lionello Venturi." In A. Giunta y L. Malosetti Costa, *Jorge Romero Brest y la revista Ver y Estimar. Arte latinoamericano en el debate de posguerra (1948-1955)*, 51-69. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2007.

—. "Vanguardia concreta rioplatense. Acerca del arte concreto y la música." *ICAA Working Papers* International Center for the Arts of the Americas, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (Sept. 2007): 11-16.

—. "Variaciones sobre un mismo tema. La obra sobre papel de Manuel Espinosa." *Manuel Espinosa. Antología sobre papel*, 5-7. Buenos Aires: Museo de Arte Moderno, 2003.

Sarlo, Beatriz. *Borges: un escritor en las orillas*. Buenos Aires: Ariel, 1995.

Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino. *Facundo Civilización y Barbarie*. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1990.

- Schwazstein, Dora. *Entre Franco y Perón: memoria e identidad del exilio republicano español en la Argentina*. Barcelona: Crítica, 2001.
- Sebrelli, Juan José, and Dalmiro Sáenz. "¿Existió una cultura peronista?" *La Maga* (April 10, 2003) <http://www.lamaga.com.ar/www/area2/pg_notas.asp?i_notas=3536>
- _____. *Los deseos imaginarios del Peronismo*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1983.
- Servidio, Luisa Fabiana. "Intercambios culturales panamericanos durante la segunda guerra mundial: El viaje de Pettoruti a los Estados Unidos." In *Arte Argentino y Latinoamericano del Siglo XX: Sus Interrelaciones*, 55-82. Buenos Aires: Fundación Telefónica—FIARR, 2004.
- Shumway, Nicolas. *The invention of Argentina*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- Sigal, Silvia, and Eliseo Verón. *Perón o muerte: los fundamentos discursivos del fenómeno peronista*. Buenos Aires: Legasa, 1986.
- Simms, Brian. *Music of the Twentieth-Century: Style and Structure*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1996.
- Siracusano, Gabriela. "Las artes plásticas en las décadas del '40 y el '50." In *Nueva Historia Argentina: Arte, Sociedad y Política*, directed by Emilio Burucúa, 13-56. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999.
- _____. "Punto y línea sobre el campo." In *Desde la otra vereda: momentos del debate por un arte moderno en la argentina (1880-1960)*. Archivos del CAIA. 179-183. Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Jilguero, 1998.
- Sirvén, Pablo. *Perón y los medios de comunicación, 1943-1955*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de America Latina, 1984.
- Sorensen, Diana. *Facundo and the construction of Argentine culture*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- Squirru, Rafael. *Juan del Prete*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1984.
- _____. *Kosice*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1990.
- Stern, Grete. *Grete Stern: Fotografía en la Argentina, 1937-1931*. Buenos Aires: La Azotea, 1988.

- Stokstad, Marilyn. "Experiments with Form in Buenos Aires." *Art History*. Third edition. With contributions by David A. Binkley, Claudia Brown, Patricia J. Darish, Patrick Frank, Robert D. Mowry, Sara E. Orel, and D. Fairchild Ruggles. Upper Saddle River: New Jersey, 2008, 2005.
- Terán, Oscar. "Imago Mundi: de la universidad de las sombras a la universidad del relevo." *Punto de Vista* (Buenos Aires) no. 33 (Sept.-Dec. 1988): 3-7.
- Tomasini, María Cecilia. *Una revisión a la relación arte-ciencia en la obra de Raúl Lozza*. Buenos Aires: Centro Cultural Borges, 1991.
- Tulchin, Joseph S. "Foreign Policy." In *Prologue to Perón: Argentina in Depression and War, 1930-1943*, edited by Mark Falcoff and Ronald H. Dolkart, 83-109. Berkely: University of California Press, 1975.
- Ulanovsky, Carlos, and Marta Melkin. *Días de radio: historia de la radio argentina*. Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe, 1995.
- Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invención, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*. Buenos Aires: Museo Sívori, 1980.
- Verón, Eliseo. "La palabra adversativa: observaciones sobre la enunciación política." In *El Discurso Político: lenguajes y acontecimientos*, by Eliseo Verón et. al. Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1987.
- Yudkin, Jeremy. *Understanding Music*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1996.

Primary Sources

- "... Del Manifiesto de la Escuela." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.
- "Alfredo Hlito. Premio adquisición en la Segunda Bienal de Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo." *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 47.
- Algunos Maestros de la Pintura Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Publicación no. 6 de la Subsecretaría de Cultura, 1948.
- "Aquí Madí." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 4 (Oct. 1950): n.p.
- "Aquí Madí." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.
- "Aquí Madí." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 6 (1952): n.p.

- “Aquí Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 57.
- “Aquí Madí.” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 57.
- “Carta Abierta.” *Correo Literario* v. 2 no. 18 (Aug. 1st, 1944): 2.
- “Conferencias.” *Anuario Plástica* (Buenos Aires) (1941): 64-66.
- “Exposiciones del Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina.” *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 36.
- “Fin del tiempo del desprecio.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 1.
- “Homenaje a Francia.” *Insvla* v. 2 no. 6 (Spring 1944): 146-147.
- “Homenaje a los guerrilleros italianos.” *Insvla* v. 2 no. 8 (Fall 1945): 247-248.
- “Lo que es y lo que no es.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1, no. 2 (Jan. 1945): 15.
- “Muchas casas se adornaron con el tricolor francés.” *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (August 24th, 1944): 9.
- “Nuestra Militancia,” *Revista Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 2.
- “Nuestro Departamento de Difusión.” *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 33 (Nov. 15, 1952): 19.
- “Nuestro Departamento de Difusión.” *Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 34 (Dec. 1, 1952): 30.
- “París.” *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (August 24th, 1944): 9.
- “Por la noche se realizaron más demostraciones.” *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (August 24th, 1944): 8.
- “Suplemento para el diccionario Madí,” *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.
- “Una multitud imponente y fervorosa rindió altísimo homenaje a Francia: Varias horas el inmenso gentío se quedó en la plaza.” *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 25th, 1944): 1.
- “Vasily Kandinsky.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 2 (Jan. 1945): 10
- “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Torres-García.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 10.

- “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Juan del Prete.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 10.
- “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Tomás Maldonado.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 10.
- “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Antonio Berni.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v.1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 11.
- “¿A dónde va la pintura? Contesta Manuel Espinosa.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 11.
- “Los trabajadores dueños de su propia riqueza.” *Mundo Peronista* no. 81 (Feb. 1955): 23-37.
- “Noticias y comentarios.” *Insvla* v. 2 no. 6 (Spring 1944): 147-148.
- 17 de Octubre*. Buenos Aires: Secretaría de Prensa y Difusión, n.d.
- Agosti, Héctor Pablo. “Defensa del Realismo.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 3 (Apr. 1945): 5-6; 15
- Anuario Plástica* (Buenos Aires) (1941).
- Anuario Plástica* (Buenos Aires) (1942).
- Apollinaire, Guillaume. “Los Pintores Cubistas.” *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945): 12-14.
- _____. *Poemas de Guillaume Apollinaire*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Proa, 1929.
- _____. “El Marinero de Amsterdam,” in *Los mejores cuentos policiales*, edited by Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy Casares. Buenos Aires: Editorial Emecé, 1943.
- Arden Quin, Carmelo. [untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.
- Bajarlía, Juan Jacobo. *Prohombres de la Argentinidad*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Araujo, 1941.
- _____. *Literatura de Vanguardia: del Ulyses de Joyce y las escuelas poéticas* Buenos Aires: Editorial Araujo, 1946.

Bayley, Edgar, Antonio Caraduje, Simón Contreras, Manuel O. Espinosa, Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Obdulio Landi, Raúl Lozza, R. V. D. Lozza, Tomás Maldonado, Alberto Molenberg, Primaldo Mónaco, Oscar Núñez, Lidy Prati, Jorge Souza, Matilde Werbin. "Manifiesto Invencionista." *Revista Arte Concreto* (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 8.

Bayley, Edgar, Manuel Espinosa, Alfredo Hlito, Tomás Maldonado, Aldo Prior, "Artista [sic.] adhieren al Comunismo." *Orientación* v. 10 no. 304 (Sep. 19th, 1945): 6.

Bayley, Edgar. "Sobre Arte Concreto." *Orientación* (Feb. 20, 1946). Reprinted in *Arte Abstracto Argentino*, 160-161.

____. "Estreno Escurre." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

____.[untitled text], *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

Bioy Casares, Adolfo. *La invención de Morel*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Emecé, 1953 [1940].

____. "La invención de Morel." *Sur* v. 9 no. 72 (Sep. 1940): 43-71.

Borges, Jorge Luis. *El jardín de los senderos que se bifurcan*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur, 1941.

____. *Ficciones (1935-1944)*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur, 1944.

____. "Prólogo." In *La invención de Morel*, by Adolfo Bioy Casares, 12. Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1940.

____. "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," *Sur* (May 1940).

____. "Anotación al 23 de agosto de 1944." *Sur* v. 13 no. 120 (Oct. 1944): 24-26.

Brughetti, Romualdo. "Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo, tercera parte." *Criterio* v. 26 n. 1184 (Mar. 26, 1953): 226-229.

____. "Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentina de este siglo : la escultura, cuarta parte." *Criterio* v. 26 n. 1185 (Apr. 9, 1953): 280-281.

____. "Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo, segunda parte." *Criterio* v. 26 n. 1183 (Mar. 12, 1953): 188-189.

____. "Exposición de la pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo." *Criterio* v. 25 n. 1182 (Feb. 26, 1953): 148-149.

____. "El Salón Nacional de 1946." *Saber Vivir* no. 66 (1946): 24-29.

Bucich, Antonio. *Luchas y rutas de Sarmiento*. Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos "Maggiolo," 1942.

Buenos Aires. Text by Horacio Raúl Klappenbach. Photographs by Grete Stern. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Peuser, 1956.

Carlsund, Otto, Theo Van Doesburg, Jean Helion, Levon Tutundjian, and Wantz. "The Basis of Concrete Painting." In *The Tradition of Constructivism*, edited by Stephen Bann, 191-194. New York: The Viking Press, 1974.

Carrea, Lía, and Marta Traba, "XXXVIII Salón Nacional de Artes Plásticas," *Ver y Estimar*, no. 6 (September 1948): 63-67.

Chaplin, Charles. "Hacia un mundo mejor." *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 1.

Codovilla, Victorio. *Batir al Nazi-Peronismo para abrir una era de libertad y progreso*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Anteo, 1946.

Correo Literario (Buenos Aires) v. 2 no. 5 (Jan. 15, 1944): 2.

Correo Literario (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 1 (Nov. 15th, 1943): 1.

Dalí, Salvador. *Vida Secreta de Salvador Dalí*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Editorial Poseidón, 1944.

de Moraes, Vinicius. "La moderna poesía brasileña." *Sur* v. 12 no. 96 (Issue on Brasil): 19-29.

de Torre, Guillermo. "Apollinaire y la gestación de sus poemas." *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 5 (Aug. 1945): 12

____. *La Aventura y el Orden*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1943.

Eitler, Esteban. "Pieza para piano," *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p

____. "Tres poemas madíes, sobre los poemas de Kosice: 1o. Alicience por sorpresa; 2o. Landar en el poema; 3o. Conducto de aliners." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 3 (Oct. 1949): n.p.

____. "Preludio de las "Cuatro Bagatelas." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (Oct. 1948): n.p.

- Faure, Elie. *Historia del Arte*, 5 vols. Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943-44.
- Fernández, Juan Rómulo. *Sarmiento: semblanza e iconografía*. Buenos Aires: Librería del colegio, 1938.
- Forma: Organo de la Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos* no. 22 (Oct. 1942).
- Garma, Angel. "El método psicoanalítico de interpretación de los sueños: introducción a la psicología onírica." *Revista de Psicoanálisis* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 1 (1943): 39-62.
- Ghioldi, Américo. *Sarmiento: Fundador de la escuela popular*. Buenos Aires: Asociación Liberal Adelante, 1944.
- Gómez de la Serna, Ramón. *Greguerías*. Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe-Argentina, 1940.
- _____. *Greguerías*. Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe-Argentina, 1943.
- _____. *Ismos*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943.
- Gudiño Kramer, Luis. "La vida de Sarmiento que firma Manuel Gálvez." *Contrapunto* v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 13-15.
- Haber, Abraham. *Raúl Lozza y el Perceptismo: la evolución de la pintura concreta*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Diálogo, 1948.
- Hlito, Alfredo. "Significado y arte concreto." *Nueva Visión* no. 2/3 (Jan. 1953): 27.
- Huidobro, Vicente. *Manifestes*. Paris: La Revue Mondiale, 1925.
- II Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo*. São Paulo: Museu de Arte Moderna, 1953-54.
- Koellreutter, H. J. "Un nuevo mundo sonoro: carta a un joven músico." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.
- _____. "Carta Abierta." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 4 (Oct. 1950): n.p.
- Kosice, Gyula. "Madí o el arte esencial: en torno a la controversia sobre el arte no figurativo." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 5 (Oct. 1951): n.p.
- _____. "Escultura Madí." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 0 (1947): n.p.

- ____. [untitled text] *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.
- ____. "Ortogonalismo y nuevas relaciones en la composición." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 7/8 (Jun. 1954): 33-35.
- Kosice. Buenos Aires: Galería Bonino no. 35, September 1953.
- La Pintura y la Escultura Argentinas de este Siglo*. Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes; Ministerio de Educación, 1952.
- Laañ, Diyi. "Tiagno." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (1947): n.p.
- ____. "La batalla de Inod." *Arte Madí Universal* no. 2 (1947): n.p.
- Larrán de Vere, Alberto. *Sarmiento: el gran civilizador*. Buenos Aires: Atlántida, 1942.
- Letter from Max Bill (Zürich) to Gyula Kosice (Buenos Aires), 4/21/1949. Carpeta Gyula Kosice, Fundación Espigas, Buenos Aires.
- Letter from Max Bill (Zürich) to Gyula Kosice (Buenos Aires), 3/25/1949. Carpeta Gyula Kosice, Fundación Espigas, Buenos Aires.
- Levene, Ricardo. *Sarmiento: sociólogo de la realidad americana y argentina*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta López, 1938.
- Lozza, Raúl. "Acotación al nuevo realismo." *Contrapunto* (Buenos Aires) v. 1 no. 4 (Jun. 1945): 11.
- ____. "Hacia una música invencionista," *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Aug. 1946): 3.
- Maldonado, Tomás, Alfredo Hlito, Claudio Girola, and Jorge Brito. "Manifiesto de los cuatro jóvenes." In *Escritos Preulmianos*, by Tomás Maldonado. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Infinito, 1997.
- Maldonado, Tomás. *Max Bill*. Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1955.
- ____. "Lo abstracto y lo concreto en el arte moderno." *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 5-7.
- ____. "Los artistas concretos, el "realismo" y "la realidad." *Revista Arte Concreto* no. 1 (Buenos Aires) (Aug. 1946): 10.
- ____. "Problemas actuales de la comunicación." *Nueva Visión* no. 4 (1953): 21-25.

- ____. "Variaciones sobre el tema de una cara." *Nueva Visión* no. 5 (1954): 20.
- ____. "Vordemberge-Gildewart y el tema de la pureza." *Nueva Visión*, no. 2/3 (January 1953): 12–18.
- Marx, Karl and Ernst Ludwig Plank. *A dónde va la ciencia?* Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada in 1941.
- Marx, Karl and León Trotsky. *El pensamiento vivo de Karl Marx* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1940).
- Marx, Karl, Jean Fréville, and Friedrich Engels. *Sobre la literatura y el arte*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Problemas, 1940.
- Mendes, Murilo. "Lloro del poeta actual." *Sur* v. 12 no. 96 (Issue on Brasil): 46-47.
- ____. "Homenaje a Mozart." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 1 no. 23 (Jun. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 1 no. 24 (Jul. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 25 (Jul. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 26 (Aug. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 27 (Aug. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 32 (Dec. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 2 no. 33 (Nov. 1952): cover.
- Mundo Peronista* v. 4 no. 81 (Feb. 1955): cover.
- Núñez, Alvar. "XIII Salon de Otoño." *Saber Vivir* (1946): 54
- Ocampo, Victoria. "Defensa de la inteligencia: Con Sarmiento." *Sur* no. 47 (1938): 7-9.
- Palcos, Alberto. *The Pan-American ideals of Sarmiento*. Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos Juan Porrotti, 1942.
- Paz, Juan Carlos. "Arnold Schönberg y el fin de la era tonal." *Sur* 186 (April 1950): 74-93.
- ____. "Arnold Schönberg y el fin de la era tonal." *Contrapunto* v. 1 no. 6 (Oct. 1945).

- ____. "El Forum Group de Nueva York." *Cabalgata* v. 3 no. 20 (June 1948): 1, 3, 10.
- ____. "Arnold Schönberg y el expresionismo sonoro." *Cabalgata* v. 2 no. 11 (11 Mar. 1947): 9-12.
- ____. "Música estadounidense de vanguardia." *Cabalgata* v. 3 no. 16 (Feb. 1948): 1, 10.
- ____. "Alois Haba, compositor," *Cabalgata* v. 3 no. 18 (Apr. 1948): 1, 7
- Perón, Eva. *La Razón de mi Vida*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Peuser, 1951.
- Perón, Juan Domingo. *La Comunidad Organizada* [1949]. Buenos Aires: Adrifer Libros, 2001.
- ____. *Obras Completas*. Volume 7. Buenos Aires: Fundación Pro-Universitaria de la Producción y del Trabajo, 1997.
- Ponce, Aníbal. *Sarmiento: constructor de la nueva Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial "El Ateneo," 1938.
- Pórtico* v. 4 no. 14 (Jun. 1945): 16.
- Romero Brest, Jorge. "Altamira: Escuela Libre de Artes Plásticas." *Saber Vivir* v. 6 no. 61 (1946): 50-51.
- ____. "La pintura de Emilio Pettoruti: ayer y hoy." *Ver y Estimar* v. 2 no. 6 (Sep. 1948): 11-30.
- Rothfuss, Rhod. "El marco: un problema de plástica actual." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.
- Sabato, Ernesto. "Las Dos Inmortalidades del Surrealismo." *Correo Literario* (Buenos Aires) (Jan. 15, 1944): 1-2.
- Sur*, v. 12 no. 96 (Issue on Brasil)
- Sur* v. 9 no. 73 (Oct. 1940): n.p. [advertisement].
- ____. "Georges Vantongerloo." *Nueva Visión* no. 1 (December 1951): 19.
- Torres-García, Joaquín. "Divertimento." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

____. *Universalismo Constructivo: contribución a la unificación del arte y la cultura de América*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1944.

____. "Con respecto a una futura creación literaria." *Arturo* (Buenos Aires) no. 1 (Summer 1944): n.p.

Weinberg, Gregorio. "Descartes, Renán, y Sarmiento" [book review]. *Correo Literario* v. 3 no. 35 (May 1st, 1945).

Werbin, Matilde. "Fundamentos para una música elementarista." *Contemporánea* no. 1 (1948): n.p.

XXXII Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes (Buenos Aires) (1942).

XXXVIII Salón Nacional de Artes Plásticas (Buenos Aires: Subsecretaría de Cultura de la Nación, 1948).

Vita

Ana Jorgelina Pozzi-Harris was born in Rosario, Argentina, on May 16, 1972, the daughter of Jorge Antonio Pozzi and Maria Haydée Castellaro. After completing high school at the Escuela Normal Nro. 1 in Rosario, she entered the Universidad Nacional de Rosario to pursue degrees in Humanities and Fine Arts. Upon getting married in 1993, she moved to the United States with her husband. In 1994, she entered the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware, and graduated with a B.A. in Art History and a minor in History in 1996. She earned her M.A. in Art History at Queen's University at Kingston, in Ontario, Canada. Her thesis was entitled "Diego Rivera: political cultures and the European years, 1910-1921." In 1999, she entered the Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin, seeking a doctorate in Art History. At UT, she worked as Teaching Assistant and Assistant Instructor for the Department of Art and Art History, and in 2004 she served as Coordinator for the Cisneros Seminar in Abstraction and Contemporary Art at the Latin American Department of the Blanton Museum of Art. In 2005 she moved to Georgia with her family. She currently works as Adjunct Faculty at the Fine Arts Department in North Georgia College and State University (Dahlonega, Georgia), where she teaches introductory art history classes as well as upper-division courses in Modern and Contemporary art.

Permanent address: 118 Village Meadows Ln., Dahlonega, GA 30533

This dissertation was typed by the author.